

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE MYSTICISM OF IGNATIUS OF
ANTIOCH

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS SCHILLING

A THESIS

IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILADELPHIA

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PART I

PROLEGOMENA

History of the Text

The letters of Ignatius proved to be of such interest and importance that two and one-half to three centuries after their writing an editor felt compelled to write six "Ignatian" letters and to add them to the original seven—thus completing the number thirteen—and further, he augmented the original copies with numerous interpolations.¹ His identity is unknown, but he is believed to be the same person who edited old Christian writings into the collection of the "Apostolic Constitution".² His recension of the Ignatian letters was so skillfully done that, far from being suspected, it was circulated and read as genuine throughout the next 1100 years. But for three circumstances which he had been powerless to change, we would be unaware of the actual character of his work. The church historian Eusebius³ had recorded that Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, had written seven letters, and enumerated them as: to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans and Polycarp. Besides these historical data Eusebius had made three quotations from three different letters.⁴ Other church fathers also had quoted from the Ignatian letters which Eusebius listed. Furthermore, a copy of our unknown reviser's first augmented but uninterpolated edition reached the public, found copyists and then fell into the hands of translators. The Syrians translated it very soon after its appearance; the Armenians translated

¹ For complete discussions of the textual problem and literary history of the Epistles of Ignatius, see Theodor Zahn, "Ignatius von Antiochien," Gotha, 1870, cc. 1-3; J. B. Lightfoot, "The Apostolic Fathers," London, 1885, Pt. II, especially vol. I; Adolf Harnack, "Geschichte der Alchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius," Leipzig, 1893, Pt. I, vol. I, pp. 75-86, and Pt. II, vol. I, Leipzig, 1897, pp. 381-406.

² Harnack, *op. cit.* Pt. I, vol. I, p. 76; and especially, "Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel," in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, vol. II, Leipzig, 1884, p. 241 f.

³ *Historia Ecclesiastica*, III, 36.

⁴ *Ibid.* He quotes Smyrn. 3: 1 as far as *ἐπιστολῶν*, and Rom. 5; in the "Questiones ad Stephanum," I, (Op. IV, p. 381 Migne) he quotes Eph. 19: 1.

from the Syriac. In the year 1250, probably, Robert Grosseteste, of Lincoln, made a Latin translation from a lost MS of the Greek uninterpolated text in the long recension, but his version had no influence until Bishop Ussher made it the basis of his own reconstruction of the short recension text in 1644.⁵ This much simpler text, which also agreed with the quotations of Eusebius and the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries needed but little more corroboration to be accepted as the original. One, Isaac Vossius, supplied the greatest need when in 1646 he published a Greek 10th century manuscript, the Codex Mediceus Laurentius, LXII, 7, of Florence, which happily proved to be a text of the same kind. Unfortunately the codex was deficient at the end and thus had lost the text of Romans, but this loss was supplied by Ruinart of Paris in 1689 when in his "*Acta Martyrum Sincera*" he published a 10th century Greek MS of the Acts of Ignatius and the incorporated Epistle to the Romans. Then, when in 1845 Cureton published three newly discovered Syriac MSS of the 6th to the 8th centuries which contained only the letters to the Ephesians, Romans and Polycarp, and these in abbreviated form, it was believed by the editor and others that these were finally the original epistles. But this view has been thoroughly disproved by Lightfoot, who showed this recension to be nothing but a Syriac abridgment or excerpt from a complete text of the short recension. The publication of manuscripts and fragments of other translations, and of a 5th century papyrus fragment⁶ finally made possible the production of a text which is now generally accepted as the original form of the seven letters of Ignatius.⁷

⁵ "*Polycarpi et Ignatii Epistolae*," Oxford, giving the Latin and Greek texts in parallel columns.

⁶ *Smyrnaeans* 3: 3-12: 1. Berlin, P. 10581 published in 1910 by C. Schmidt and W. Schubert in the *Berliner Klassikertexte*, VI.

⁷ This universal view is unchanged by sporadic attacks such as was launched by Henri Delafosse, "*Lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche*," Paris, 1927. Delafosse sought to expose the Ignatian authorship of the epistles as the clever creation by a later "catholic" editor who took the letters of Theophoros, Marcionite bishop of Syria, and reworked them as writings of an Ignatius who had later been martyred at Philippi. Among the editors who print the text of the short (Lightfoot's middle) recension as the original of Ignatius' epistles the following are the most important: J. B. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*; Gebhardt-Harnack-Zahn, "*Patrum Apostolicum Opera*," vol. III, Leipzig, 1876; F. X. Funk, "*Patres Apostolici*," vol. I, Tübingen,

Literary Setting

Because of its considerable size the Ignatian correspondence ranks in early Christian literature second to the Pauline epistolary collection. Not only does their common literary form place them side by side, but intrinsic reasons, as well, contribute to this. The two correspondences shed light upon each other. The Ignatian letters contain ample evidence of the existence of the complete collection of Paul's letters,⁸ and of their deep indebtedness, religiously, to these: while, on the other hand, their collection at the hands of Polycarp suggests how Paul's correspondence may well have been collected by the various churches. The Synoptic Gospels were known to Ignatius,⁹ though the Matthean narrative was plainly his favorite.¹⁰ Lit-

1901; August Lelong, "Les Pères Apostolique," vol. III, Paris, 1910; Kirsopp Lake, "The Apostolic Fathers," vol. II, N. Y., 1919.

⁸ W. R. Inge, who is responsible for the section on Ignatius in "The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers," Oxford, 1905, pp. 64-76, found on the basis of 25 references to 1 Corinthians that there can be no reasonable doubt that this Pauline letter was used by Ignatius; the use of the Ephesian epistle (9 references) reaches a high degree of probability; with a lower degree of probability the same may be said of Romans (4 references), 2 Corinthians (3), Galatians (5) and Philippians (4); the references to Colossians (7), 1 Thessalonians (3) and Philemon (1) are too uncertain to allow a reliable conclusion of a definite use. Von der Goltz, "Ignatius von Antiochien," Leipzig 1894, p. 178 ff. and see Tables I and II, also made a very thorough study of the literary affinities between Ignatius and Paul. Of such contacts, whether allusions, echoes or quotations free and literal, he found with 1 Cor. 33; Romans 5; 2 Cor. 8; Gal. 12; Phil. 6; 1 Thess. 6; Philem. 3; 2 Thess. 2; Eph. 11; Col. 4; (the last two epistles he did not class as Pauline). Numerous references are also given in J. Moffatt, "Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament," N. Y., 1929, in the discussion of each Pauline letter.

⁹ W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-81, enumerates 11 close parallels with Matthew; the references to Mark (2) and to Luke (3) he lists as uncertain evidence, but adds (p. 80), "the balance of probability seems to be slightly in favor of a knowledge of the third Gospel by Ignatius." V. d. Goltz, *op. cit.*, p. 176, agrees with the above conclusion but does not list parallels. The inference which some have drawn from Philad. 8: 2 that the Gospel corpus (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) as against the Acts-Epistles corpus (τὸ ἀπόστολον) was already in existence is without adequate support. Such a corpus would involve a dogmatic authority which is not presupposed in the evidence of our letters. The most that can be said safely is that this reference indicates a written document (see the context: ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις [w. A instead of ἀρχαίους G. See Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, ad loc.]. . . τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ . . . διὲν γέγραπται); but just which Gospel or source is uncertain. Cf. Zahn, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

¹⁰ See the statistics in preceding note and the convincing argument of B. H. Streeter, "The Four Gospels," N. Y., 1925, p. 505 ff., to the effect that Matthew was the Gospel of the church at Antioch; cf. his "Primitive Church," N. Y., 1929, pp. 286-287.

erary relationships with the Fourth Gospel are doubtful, though parallelisms in thought and expression are prominent.¹¹ From data in the subsequent discussion it will be seen that Ignatius was partly a contemporary of Presbyter John of Ephesus, and that his correspondence appeared in the immediate environment not only of the Johannine literature, but also of the Apocalypse of John, First Peter, the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistle of Jude, to mention only canonical writings.¹²

The Author's Personality

The Ignatian letters are preeminently human documents. Like the Pauline letters, they are not epistles in the strict sense of being missives carefully studied and formulated, smoothed and polished for the ulterior purpose of becoming collected and preserved as literature. Rather, they are spontaneous and sincere expressions of the author's very soul, self-communications of his inmost, truest self. In language sometimes winged, sometimes earthbound, sometimes precipitate and sparkling and then again calm and paternal, sometimes hurried and vague or elevated by sublime, liturgic rhythm, the reader to-day can still feel the vibrations of Ignatius' varying moods and emotions and see in clear relief the self-portrait of the man. Von der Goltz¹³ has well remarked that, thanks to these very human documents (which contain our only information about him), we know more about Ignatius than we do about some of those about whom others have written much.

¹¹ W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-83, discusses 7 parallels and concludes that "Ignatius' use of the Fourth Gospel is highly probable." V. d. Goltz, *op. cit.*, pp. 127, 143, however, finds only a kinship of spirit without literary dependence. So also B. W. Bacon, "The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate," N. Y., 1910, p. 64. The two sides of the argument are succinctly presented by Moffatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 577-579. In addition to his authorities for literary affinities we may cite C. F. Burney, "The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel," Oxon, 1922, Appendix; and B. H. Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 454 f.; and to those of the other view, H. Schlier, "Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den Ignatiusbriefen," Gieszen, 1929, p. 176, 177. In this thesis, however, the spiritual kinship of Ignatius and John is alone of importance.

¹² This statement is based on the findings of B. H. Streeter, "Primitive Church," conspectus 101, etc. Contemporary non-canonical literatures will be discussed in the course of the study.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 98.

The personality that appears there is imposing and striking. He is an individual of fiery passion and strong compelling convictions, but also gifted with a versatile mind and a vivid imagination. Word-plays are prominent in his language. So he writes once in anticipating his death in Rome:

You may sing to the Father in Christ Jesus, because God considered the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the setting of the sun, after having brought him from the rising of the sun. It is good to set from the world towards God, so that I may rise to Him.¹⁴

Frequently he plays between the active and passive form of a verb, as for instance:

Those who in ignorance deny him (*ἀρνοῦνται*), nay, rather are denied (*ἡρνήθησαν*) by him. . . .¹⁵

At other times his profound thought finds expression in effective paradoxes, as when he employs the words "to live," "to die," "man," to mean the opposite of what they ordinarily convey. He begs:

Do not hinder me from living, do not want me to die . . . permit me to gain the pure light; when I have come there I shall be a man.¹⁶

The same mental trait is seen in frequent antitheses, "God *vs.* World," "death and life," "spirit and flesh," and in recurring pairs of ideas, "faith and love," "passion and resurrection," and others.¹⁷ Newly coined words and original phrases flash as

¹⁴ Rom. 2: 2. This impressive paronomasia is appreciated only in the Greek:

ὅτι τὸν ἐπίσκοπον Συρίας ὁ θεὸς κατηξιώσεν		
εὐρέθῃναι εἰς δύσιν	} ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς	} μεταπεμψάμενος
καλὸν τὸ δύναι		
ἀπὸ κόσμον	} }	
πρὸς θεόν		
ἵνα εἰς αὐτὸν		

Apart from the words themselves, the happy parallel which Ignatius finds here between the course of his life in this world and his life in the world beyond is just one illustration of his habitual parallelization of things here and there, as well as of the thorough realism which he extends from the one to the other.

¹⁵ Smyrn. 5: 1. See also Philad. 10: 1, 2; Trall. 5: 2; etc.

¹⁶ Rom. 6.

¹⁷ For references see E. J. Goodspeed, "Index Patristicus." Paradoxes,

naturally from his pen as sparks from an electric battery. In Christian literature he is the first to speak of "the Catholic Church" (ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία).¹⁸ In warning against "the snare of vain doctrine" (as Lake renders it) he cautions against "fish hooks (ἀγκίστρα) of vain doctrine."¹⁹ Advising Polycarp concerning the treatment of weak brethren, he admonishes:

Not every wound is healed with the same plaster. Relieve convulsions with fomentations.²⁰

The paraphernalia for building God's temple, he fascinatingly describes thus:

You are as stones of the temple of the Father, prepared for the building of God the Father, carried up to the heights by the engine of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, and using as a rope the Holy Spirit. Now, your faith is your windlass and love is the road which leads to God. You are then all fellow-travellers, and carriers of God, carriers of the temple, carriers of Christ. . . .²¹

The originality and boldness of his metaphors is characteristically illustrated also in the following passage:

For there are some who are in the habit of carrying about the Name with wicked guile, but do certain other things unworthy of God: these you must avoid as wild animals, for they are ravening dogs, who bite secretly, and against them you must guard yourselves, for they are hard to cure. There is one physician, who is both flesh and spirit, born yet not born, in man God, in death true life, both of Mary and of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord.²²

With characteristic French literary acumen Auguste Lelong²³ describes the style of Ignatius in brief terms: "A conviction pro-

antitheses and pairs of corresponding ideas are all characteristics of the mystic type.

¹⁸ Smyrn. 8: 2. Of course, with Ignatius this expression is far from having the meaning it has acquired in history.

¹⁹ Magn. 11.

²⁰ Pol. 2.

²¹ Eph. 9.

²² Eph. 7. These illustrations of Ignatius' style are chosen entirely at random and without attempting more than the illustration of some of the outstanding characteristics of Ignatius' mind. Full references may be found in the commentaries by Lightfoot and Bauer, and especially v. d. Goltz, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.

²³ *Op. cit.*, III, p. XXIX: "Conviction profonde et entraînant, mouvement passionné, émotion extraordinaire, exaltation même: tels sont les traits caractéristique de ces lettres."

found and inspiring, a passionate spirit, and unusual emotion, even an exaltation: these are the characteristic traits of these letters."

Who is this arresting personality? The attempt to answer this question reveals the fact that apart from the fragmentary information (as regards definite events) proffered by the letters themselves history tells us next to nothing about his life. Eusebius in his "Chronicon"²⁴ reports that Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch in Syria, suffered martyrdom in Rome under Emperor Trajan. But though he puts it in the tenth year of Trajan's reign, he does so merely as an approximation without "professing knowledge of the exact year," as Streeter has pointed out.²⁵ This and the one already referred to regarding the list of the letters are probably the only references of historical value outside of the letters themselves, and are so accepted by Harnack,²⁶ Lightfoot²⁷ and other scholars.²⁸ The tradition that apart from Peter he was the second bishop of Antioch²⁹ is historically questionable: and purely legendary are the stories of the "Acts of Ignatius" (3rd cent.) and the "Antiochene Acts" (4th cent.), and to some extent the historian Socrates' note on Ignatius' vision of the angels singing antiphonal hymns.³⁰ On the other hand, the traditions and legends do reflect the impressions which this colorful personality left on subsequent generations. In other words, they point to those characteristics of the man which appeared most prominently to his own times. It was not until fairly late in life that he became converted to Christianity, which fact seems always to have caused him painful regrets.³¹ How-

²⁴ II, p. 162 (ed. Schwartz, 1875).

²⁵ "Primitive Church," Appendix B, p. 280.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, Pt. II, vol. I, p. 402.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 28 ff.

²⁸ It seems necessary to cite further authorities from the many who hold this position.

²⁹ Origen, Hom. VI on Luke (ed. Migne III, p. 938); Eusebius, H. E. III, 22, 36.

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, VI, 8. Cf. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 30.

³¹ Cf. Rom. 9; Eph. 21; Trall. 13; Smyrn. 11. To take the self-designations *ἐκτρώμα* and *ἐσχατος* in this historical sense as Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, pt. II, vol. I, p. 28, 391 ff.: cf. Zahn, *op. cit.*, p. 404; suggests has all probability in its favor. Paul certainly used *ἐκτρώμα* in this temporal sense, cf. 1 Cor. 15: 8, 9. Though these words may be echoes of Paul's expressions of humility, there is no justification for treating them as evidence of a pitiful attempt to imitate that humility, as Streeter does, Primitive Church, p.

ever, it was not long until the church in Antioch came to pay him especial respect and to honor him as their leader. Two factors contributed preeminently to his elevation as bishop of the Antiochene diocese: his gift of teaching and his prophetic qualities. Since he thus combined in his own person the charismata of teacher and prophet it was inevitable that his bishopric would take on a monarchical character. Not only his energetic and impelling personality, but also the precarious times and the example of the church in Rome caused the Syrian church to concede this high authority to Ignatius and his episcopal successors.³² There is much in favor of Lightfoot's conjecture³³ that his bishopric extended from 69 A. D. to 107 A. D., though the last date must be moved up to 115 A. D. The contact with Apostles which this makes probable and the long term of office through critical events must have been added factors in the elevation of the bishop.³⁴

An "act of God" was the occasion for the privation of the Syrian church of its bishop, but also—as we now recognize—of the giving of him to the whole Christian church.³⁵ In December A. D. 115—Malalas³⁶ (the 6th cent. chronographer) says it was the 13th—a devastating earthquake visited Antioch. Trajan was in the city at the time. Believing that the catastrophe expressed the anger of the gods, the excited populace turned upon the bishop of the Christians as the chief offender, and with that mad cry, "ad bestias," they hurried him and possibly other leading men before the emperor. The reason why this otherwise fair-minded emperor should yield to popular demand we may conjecture to have been a report of Ignatius' zealous activity toward solidifying the church into a closed mystery cult or

176. Ignatius was a most original personality, and while these words, at least, may be borrowed (though Paul said ἐλάχιστος—"the least," while Ignatius calls himself ἑσχατος—"the last"!) the experience they hint at was genuinely his own.

³² See Streeter's illuminating analysis of the growth of mon-episcopacy in Syria. "Primitive Church," ch. 5.

³³ *Op. cit.*, Pt. II, vol. I, p. 30.

³⁴ On the basis of internal evidence further conjectures will be ventured later in this study on Ignatius' life before he became bishop.

³⁵ The subsequent statements are based on Streeter's reconstruction in *op. cit.*, Appendix B. He in turn drew information from Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, Vol. II, Sect. I, p. 413 ff., 436 ff.

³⁶ "Chronographia," XI, p. 275, ed. Bonn.

society.³⁷ It was just such secret associations which Trajan feared and was anxious to suppress because he saw in them a threat to the state. But whatever his real reason, he commanded that they be taken to Rome. Thereupon he was turned over to a company of soldiers³⁸ who were also commissioned to pick up criminals for the amphitheater on their way through Asia Minor to Rome. Stopping along the way for varying lengths of time this troop finally reached Smyrna in the month of August.³⁹ Taking the northern route to Smyrna they passed through Philadelphia⁴⁰ and Sardis, which had given them the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the churches in those cities. While in Smyrna, Ignatius took the opportunity of writing letters to the churches of Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralles, primarily to thank them for the kindness they had shown towards him by sending delegations of their leaders (bishops, presbyters and deacons) to visit him in Smyrna. Each of the delegations returned with a letter to their church. But he also wrote to Rome to prepare them for his coming. The next longer stop was in Troas, whither faithful friends from Ephesus and Smyrna had accompanied him,⁴¹ and from there he dispatched his last letters, to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna. This is the last we hear of him. Only Eusebius' short remark informs us that he met his desired end in Rome.

For a fair interpretation of these letters with regard to the psychology of Ignatius it is necessary to bear the situation of the writing in mind. They were all written under the same circumstances, these being virtually the same in Troas as in Smyrna. Privacy was not the privilege of a prisoner, and Ignatius must have snatched brief intervals between many interruptions for the penning of his messages. That he wrote in haste is very apparent in the frequent occurrence of anacoluthic sentences.⁴²

³⁷ Streeter does not make this suggestion. But that such was Ignatius' activity we know; that he condemned the gods as he did Jews and heretics (Streeter's suggestion) we do not know. Evidence for the indicated goal of Ignatius' work will be given later.

³⁸ Rom. 5: 1.

³⁹ Rom. 10: 3.

⁴⁰ Philad. 3: 1; 6: 3; 7: 1.

⁴¹ Philad. 11; Smyrn. 12.

⁴² See, for instance, Romans 1; Magnesians 2: 6; Ephesians 1; etc.

The total time of writing was a short period of possibly not more than a month, including the time of the journey from Smyrna to Troas. The author's situation was clearly not normal, and it would have been only natural if his temper and mood had been influenced accordingly. In company with criminals, he was the prisoner of rough and cruel soldiers who, rather than treat him mildly, mistreated him the more as he was kind to them.⁴³ In this respect Ignatius' situation was parallel with Paul's experience in Ephesus out of which he wrote his "sorrowful letter" to Corinth.⁴⁴ On the other hand, in Smyrna and Troas friends visited the aged bishop, and while encouraging him on his hard road and counselling with him concerning conditions in their respective churches they not only accorded him high respect as to a great bishop, prophet and teacher,⁴⁵ but also paid him special honors because he was favored to attain the martyr's crown.⁴⁶ Polycarp, a fellow bishop, had even kissed his chains.⁴⁷ Ignatius, who felt that his state of captivity enjoined deep humility upon him,⁴⁸ tried to resist this influence. He feared that it would puff him up⁴⁹ and resultant pride would cause his fall and thereby empty his martyrdom of its real value. In fact, he admitted that he felt strong resentment against injuries⁵⁰ and in-

⁴³ Rom. 5: 1.

⁴⁴ 2 Cor. 10-13. Compare also 1 Cor. 15: 32; 2 Cor. 1: 8 with Ignatius' Rom. 5: 1. The similarity of experience appears even in a parallelism of expression concerning it. Paul designated that terrible experience thus (1 Cor. 15: 32): . . . *κατὰ ἄνθρωπον θηριομάχησα ἐν Ἑφέσῳ*; Ignatius similarly (Rom. 5: 1) . . . *Ἀπὸ Συρίας μέχρι Ῥώμης θηριομαχῶ*. The same clash of contradictory emotions which we note below to have taken place in Ignatius is clearly revealed in Paul's case as well; see especially 2 Cor. 12, 13.

⁴⁵ Trall. 3; Rom. 4; Eph. 3. These passages reflect the deference and honors which were being accorded him.

⁴⁶ The context of Trall. 4 definitely shows that Ignatius was being magnified as *ὁ μαρτύς*, not as *ὁ θεοφύρος*. Cf. Zahn, *op. cit.*, p. 414 f.

⁴⁷ Pol. 2: 3.

⁴⁸ Eph. 12: 1; Rom. 4: 3, etc. To Ignatius martyrdom was both a glory and a perilous test—but a glory only if he bore the test. The very fact that he was singled out for martyrdom gave him to consider that his character needed this fiery ordeal (such an heroic measure, as it were) in order to become acceptable to God. This is the secret of his self-deprecatory remarks. Yet he did not make them indiscriminately and in a self-pitying way, for to the Philadelphians, with whom he had had a controversy, he makes no such confessions. There is starch even in his self-depreciation.

⁴⁹ Trall. 4: 1.

⁵⁰ I owe this observation to J. Moffatt, "Ignatius of Antioch," *Journal of Religion*, April, 1930, vol. X, no. 2, p. 181. His brilliant translation of Trall. 4: 2—"I do long to suffer as a martyr, but I know not if am worthy;

terpreted this reaction as a lack of meekness—a condition which could only be aggravated by the adulations of his admirers. Thus he found himself in a paradoxical position: on the one hand his wardens made him feel keenly that he was an ordinary prisoner and no longer a man of authority, while the impending test of martyrdom made him feel his own insufficiency; on the other hand his friends and his own instinct for leadership impelled him to continue the exercise of his accustomed authority among fellow-believers.

To take conflicting expressions which sprang out of this contradictory state of mind as proofs of a neurotic temper, as Streeter does,⁵¹ is not correct, to my mind. If taken as Streeter interprets them, they could at best reflect only an unusual condition, and therefore would rather “misrepresent the real Ignatius.”⁵² However, Ignatius’ “will to power,” as will be seen, was nothing but the prophetic spirit that had made him bishop and was still dynamic in him, and had nothing to do with an inferiority complex, while the expressions of humility which Streeter takes as evidence of such a complex are wrongly interpreted by him. Some of them are to be explained historically-chronologically⁵³ and others can only be hoped to be understood when interpreted in the light of the martyr-psychology of Ignatius’ time,⁵⁴ with due allowance, of course, for the play of moods in the specific experience at the time of writing,—instead of in the light of the theories of 20th century psychologists. After all, the abnormal is a relative conception which we form on the basis of statistical data. Whatever these reduce to a position above or below the average we designate as sub- or abnormal. But the average varies greatly in generations and races. Much that is normal to-day was abnormal even less than a millenium ago; and the reverse is equally true. The historian has, therefore, failed of his task when he attempts to measure an his-

others may not see my angry irritation (τὸ γὰρ ζῆλος πολλοῖς μὲν οὐ φαίνεται), but sorely does it ravage me; I need the gentleness that defeats the Prince of this world”—finally clarifies a stubborn passage.

⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 174–178.

⁵² So Streeter himself, *ibid.*, p. 178.

⁵³ See above, p. 11, on Rom. 9; Eph. 21, etc.

⁵⁴ Trall. 3: 3; Rom. 4: 3; Eph. 12: 1; Trall. 4: 1, etc., and see the references which Streeter cites of Ignatius’ passion for martyrdom, pp. 177–178.

torical person according to modern averages. With such a method he actually misrepresents his subject. When the historian undertakes a psychological appraisal he must take his standards from the time in which his particular subject lived.

A study of Ignatius' martyr-psychology will follow at a later point, but here it may be remarked that the Apostle Paul, whom not even the wildest imagination will accuse of having an inferiority complex and a will to power, demonstrated that two contradictory powers, each genuine, could operate side by side in one man: deep humility and a strong sense of authority. To the Corinthians he wrote:

For, I think, God hath set forth us the Apostles last of all, as men doomed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, both to angels and men. We are weak, but ye are strong; ye have glory but we have dishonor. . . .⁵⁵

Yet he had a vivid consciousness of spiritual superiority (vss. 15, 16):

. . . for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel. I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me.

Though he could write in all sincerity,

For I am the least of the Apostles, that I am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God,⁵⁶

he could "withstand . . . to the face, because he stood condemned,"⁵⁷ Cephas, the first of the apostles, and could write to the Galatians,

But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.⁵⁸

What reason is there for supposing that Ignatius was less sincere and less genuinely humble when he wrote to the Trallians (3: 3):

Since I love you, I just spare you, though I could write more sharply on His behalf. I did not think myself competent for this, that being a convict I should order you as though I were an Apostle;⁵⁹

⁵⁵ 1 Cor. 4: 8 f.

⁵⁶ 1 Cor. 15: 9.

⁵⁷ Gal. 2: 4.

⁵⁸ Gal. 1: 8.

⁵⁹ I take here Lightfoot's reconstruction of the corrupt text.

and to the Ephesians (12: 1):

I know who I am and to whom I write. I am a convict, you have received mercy, I am in peril, you are established?

The key to the mind in which these opposite characteristics have found a *modus vivendi et operandi* lies deeper than the range of concepts and terms of abnormal psychology.

The Burden of the Letters

Taken as a whole, the letters express concern for three things: the solidification of ecclesiastical organization with a bishop at the head; orthodox teaching concerning the person of Christ—in protest against docetic influence; the welfare of his own church in Antioch. From the time of his seizure by the Antiochene mob his church had been without a bishop.⁶⁰ Why did all of six months elapse before a successor was appointed? Was it because there were opponents to the episcopal constitution? Were the gentiles of the city trying to disrupt the church by preventing the election of a leader? Were Judaists or docetic heretics causing party strife in the church so that an harmonious election could not take place? Ignatius was so greatly worried over this situation that he besought all the churches which he addressed from Smyrna to pray for Antioch. In Troas he finally received cheering news to the effect, apparently, that the order of the church had been restored as he desired.⁶¹ This led him to invite the churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna to send delegates to Antioch to congratulate them for their happy achievement.

But if he was concerned that his own church have a bishop to succeed himself, he was equally solicitous that all the churches of his acquaintance accord their bishop the very highest respect and be subject to him "as to the Lord himself."⁶² Kirsopp Lake succinctly sums up Ignatius' episcopal burden as follows: "Ignatius is exceedingly anxious in each community to strengthen respect for the bishop and presbyters. He ascribes the fullest

⁶⁰ Rom. 9: 1.

⁶¹ Philad. 10: 1; Smyrn. 11: 2; Pol. 7: 1.

⁶² Eph. 6: 1; Magn. 6: 1; Trall. 3: 11; Smyrn. 8: 2-9: 1; etc.

kind of divine authority to their organization, and recognizes as valid no church, institution, or worship without their sanction.'⁶³ Streeter goes further and, because he finds emphatic pleas for the monarchical episcopate in all but one of the letters, he insists that the idea "had become a real obsession" with Ignatius.⁶⁴

On the surface Ignatius' language in regard to this office does seem extravagant and indicative of an "idée fixe," but a more careful scrutiny of the situation should greatly moderate this opinion. The intensity of his anxiety is increased by reading his statements in the successive letters—six in all on this matter. But to all practical purposes there are only two: one circular letter sent from Smyrna and one from Troas. A modern bishop would dictate and dispatch a mimeographed letter, but Ignatius could not do that. He wrote separate letters, three at a time, and gave them the personal touch appropriate to the addressees; but they are all very much alike in content and emotional expression. Virtually, then, it is only one plea repeated in quasi-duplicate letters. Of course, his mind was concentrated on the idea, but in order to say that it was an obsessive concentration there must be more proof than our letters contain. These only give evidence that this intensive concentration existed at a time when he was surrounded by bishops, as he was in Smyrna by four of them,⁶⁵ and was sending letters to their churches, or at a time when his own dignity and authority had been seriously impugned by the schismatics of Philadelphia⁶⁶ whereby he may have been aggravated to redoubled insistence upon his ideal. Certainly it is only reasonable to find the cause of Ignatius' intensive concentration on the episcopal ideal in some concrete occasion obtaining at the time of writing and witnessed to in the letters themselves.

There is no reason to believe that the idea was so fixed in his mind that through a protracted period of his life he cried it

⁶³ *Op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 167.

⁶⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁶⁵ Onesimus of Ephesus (Eph. 1: 3), Polycarp of Smyrna (Eph. 21: 1; Magn. 15), Damas of Magnesia (Magn. 2: 1) and Polybius of Tralles (Trall. 1: 1).

⁶⁶ Philad. 7, 8 ff.

out on every occasion as Cato had called out his deadly refrain, "Carthago delenda est." If that had been the case one would expect the traditions and legends concerning him to preserve some deposit of such work, some story of his fighting for mon-episcopal authority either in his own or some one else's behalf. But it is striking that Ignatius the Bishop made little or no impression on the public imagination. Only one tradition is preserved of his work as bishop,⁶⁷ and this relates that Ignatius "saw a vision of angels who were praising the Holy Trinity in antiphonal hymns, and delivered the form of his vision as a custom to the church in Antioch, whence this custom spread likewise throughout all the churches." Here is not the obsessed disciplinarian, but the visionary mystic! Nor does the evidence warrant the conclusion that the idea was fixed in Ignatius' sub-conscious mind. If so, the idea would certainly, somehow, have been conveyed in his letter to the Romans if only in some congratulatory remark because their bishop had attained his proper height, and the people properly respected him; or even gratitude might have been expressed for the excellent ideal in this respect which the Roman church pictured to the Christian world. The very fact that "the church of Rome" was the ideal church to Ignatius⁶⁸ would have given his sub-conscious mind an occasion for expressing itself in a commendatory way about that fact. But the letter to the Romans shows that Ignatius was concentrated on another idea with an equal if not greater emotional intensity than on the episcopal idea. Furthermore, in expressing concern for his own church, his language is surprisingly moderate. At no time does he pray that the church in Syria may be granted a bishop—which prayer his subconscious mind would certainly have forced to expression, but he only said, "remember in your prayers the church in Syria,"⁶⁹ or "pray for the church in Syria."⁷⁰ The farthest that he goes in this direction is,

⁶⁷ Socrates, "Historia Ecclesiastica" VI, 8.

⁶⁸ See the salutation in his letter to them. See also Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

⁶⁹ Trall. 13: 1; Rom. 9: 1.

⁷⁰ Eph. 21: 2; *cf.* Magn. 14: 1.

Remember in your prayers the church in Syria which has God for its shepherd in my place. Only Jesus Christ shall be its bishop,—and your love.⁷¹

When this is compared with his expressions of satisfaction written in Troas,⁷² as for instance.

They are now at peace, and have recovered their proper greatness, and their proper constitution⁷³ has been restored to them,

one is tempted to think that he was concerned more about the general order of his church than that it should have a bishop. For, why, after his eloquent appeals to other churches on behalf of the bishop's authority, did he not say outright that his church was blessed again with a bishop, or something to that effect? At any rate, he certainly would have said so if he had been obsessed with an *idée fixe*.

Here, too, neurotic psychology fails to fathom the mind and manner of Ignatius. There was a rational basis⁷⁴ for his unusual (up to that time) magnification of the episcopal office. Once this is understood, the key is found to his emotional psychology. His emphasis on the authority of the bishop was secondary to his concern for the teaching of the correct doctrine of Christ. He watched anxiously the outward life of the churches, and protested vigorously against schismatic movements,⁷⁵ and especially "Judaistic" tendencies in religious practice,⁷⁶ but he probed deeper and centered his attention upon what he believed to be the underlying evil of these troubles, namely, the wrong belief concerning Christ. If Ignatius had any obsession it was orthodoxy; mon-episcopacy was simply subservient to it.⁷⁷ His letters are packed with protests against heresy and

⁷¹ Rom. 9: 1.

⁷² Smyrn. 11: 2; cf. Philad. 10: 1; Pol. 7: 1.

⁷³ The Greek word is *σωματεῖον* ("body"), but it has here the figurative meaning of "organization" or "constitution."

⁷⁴ The argument on this point deals only with the practical side of this rational basis. The philosophic premises of his position will be discussed under the specific treatment of his mysticism.

⁷⁵ Trall. 5-11.

⁷⁶ Magn. 8-11; Philad. 6-9.

⁷⁷ Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, vol. I, p. 39, says: "... yet with himself this subject (of episcopacy), prominent as it is, was secondary to the other. The ecclesiastical order was enforced by himself almost solely as a security for the doctrinal purity."

with exposition of true doctrine. One of his letters he expressly devoted to the true belief in Jesus Christ. For he wrote to the Magnesians (1: 1),

I resolved in my joy to send you a letter upon faith in Jesus Christ.⁷⁸

After having devoted much space to this subject in his letter to the Ephesians, he promised to send them a second letter devoted expressly to doctrinal exposition. He wrote (20: 1),

If Jesus Christ find me worthy through your prayers, and it be his will, in the second book, which I intend to write to you, I will show you concerning the dispensation of the new man Jesus Christ, which I have begun to discuss,—concerning his faith and his love, his sufferings and his resurrection.

While he thus pursued his main objective, he necessarily paused frequently to discuss methods of preventing the spread of heresy, and as one of the main instruments of combating this danger he stressed the episcopal organization. But he did this with no greater extravagance of language than he employed to set forth the absolute divinity of Christ over against heretical detractors. As his episcopal idea was in its rational aspect the result of his Christologic convictions, so the intensity of feeling generated by these convictions animated equally the promulgation of that idea.

The heresy was a complete docetism which thoroughly dissolved the earthly life of Christ into an illusion.⁷⁹ In Ignatius' polemics against it we see the first crystallization of the church's creed. His epitome of the faith of the Smyrnaeans⁸⁰ seems to be the pattern according to which the baptismal formula in Rome was formed, out of which in turn grew the Apostolic Creed; and his brief history of Jesus Christ⁸¹ (Lightfoot calls it Ignatius'

⁷⁸ The text reads: ἐν πίστει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ προσλαλῆσαι ὑμῖν. I have adopted Moffatt's translation and interpretation of the preposition ἐν here. He argues convincingly that ἐν here equals περί, justifying his conclusion by the use of ἐν in parallel passages: Magn. 11; Eph. 20, etc. See his "Two Notes on Ignatius and Justin Martyr," *Harvard Theological Review*, April, 1930, XXIII, 2.

⁷⁹ Trall. 10; Smyrn. 2, and W. Bauer's discussion on Trall. 10 in "Die Briefe des Ignatius von Antiochien," Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum N. T.*, Tüb., 1920.

⁸⁰ Smyrn. 1.

⁸¹ Trall. 9.

Creed) sounds almost literally like that Creed itself.⁸² From these passages it is plain that his personal religion, like Paul's, was Christocentric, and that with Paul and the Christians in general he shared the common views concerning the person of Christ: Christ is the Lord;⁸³ the Saviour;⁸⁴ the Son of God;⁸⁵ as such he was preëxistent;⁸⁶ "in Christ Jesus" or "in Jesus Christ"⁸⁷ or "through Jesus Christ"⁸⁸ the individual believer and the body of believers live and have their being. But in his presentation of the essentials of Christian faith Ignatius went farther in one particular feature and made definite doctrine of what hitherto had been expressed vaguely or only with reticence. This was in regard to the divinity of Christ. The reality of the absolute divine life of Jesus he stressed in so thoroughgoing a way as to include the birth. Drawing from the Gospel of Matthew the idea of the Virgin Birth of Christ he now insisted on it as a necessary tenet of belief: not only was Christ "truly born,"⁸⁹ but

he is truly of the family of David according to the flesh, God's son according to the will and power of God, truly born of a Virgin. . . .⁹⁰

This detail of belief probably grew out of his great doctrine which dominated his whole Christology, namely, that Christ is God and that in the fullest sense of the word, ὁ Θεός.⁹¹ As God he is, however, clearly distinct from the Father, and even sub-

⁸² C. A. Briggs, "Theological Symbolics," N. Y., 1914, pp. 51, 63, 66, 67, 70, 77, traces the roots of the Apostles' Creed article by article in Ignatius' statements. Th. Zahn, "The Apostles' Creed," Engl. Translation, London, 1899, pp. 87-91, refers to Trall. 9; Smyrn. 1; Magn. 11; Eph. 18, 20; Rom. 7 as "passages which bear considerable resemblances to the free representations of the baptismal Creed in Irenaeus and Tertullian." These Ignatian beginnings of the Creeds are also recognized by A. C. McGiffert, "The Apostles' Creed," N. Y., 1902, pp. 80-83; F. Kattenbusch, "Das Apostolische Symbol," Leipzig, 1900, p. 312 ff; and others.

⁸³ ὁ Κύριος—Eph. 7: 2; Magn. 7: 1; Philad. 8: 1; etc.

⁸⁴ ὁ Σωτήρ—Eph. 1: 1; Philad. 9: 2; Smyrn. 7: 1, etc.

⁸⁵ Eph. 2: 1; 4: 2; Magn. 13: 1; Trall. 12: 2; Rom. sal., etc.

⁸⁶ Magn. 6: 1.

⁸⁷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ—Eph. 1: 1; 3: 1; 8: 2; 10: 3, etc.

⁸⁸ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ—Eph. 4: 2; Magn. 5: 2, etc.

⁸⁹ Trall. 9—ἀληθῶς, ἐγενήθη.

⁹⁰ Smyrn. 1—γεννημένον ἀληθῶς ἐκ παρθένου. See G. A. Barton's article, "Some Influences of Apollon in the N. T." Part I, Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. XLIII, 1924, New Haven.

⁹¹ Eph. salut.; 7: 2; 15: 3; 18: 2; Rom. salut., etc.

ordinate to Him.⁹² Only the Father he calls the Most High, and Jesus Christ "his only Son."⁹³ It is safe to say that this belief did not have its inception in rational reflection, for according to his letters Ignatius did not attempt to establish it metaphysically. The well-spring of these doctrines was his worship of and personal affection for Christ. It was a matter of personal experience with him. To Christ he directed his prayers,⁹⁴ for Christ was his God, the believer's God.⁹⁵ But consistently to speak of Christ as "our God," as Ignatius did, was to say "that Christ was that God, the possession of whom characteristically distinguished the Christians from Jews and Greeks—their especial cult-God."⁹⁶ In Ignatius the slowly growing consciousness of being a distinct and fully developed cult with Christ as the cult deity thus reached its final development among the early Christians. Just what type the cult was in his mind will be seen later.⁹⁷

As Ignatius' belief was inspired by his worshipful devotion, so it was, on the other hand, grounded in practical life. Faith and love, religion and ethics, were inseparable in his mind. To be a Christian meant not only to have the right belief in Christ, but also to live the Christ-life: to be "Christ's man!"⁹⁸ He expected and demanded that tangible results appear in life as practical proofs of one's personal relationship to Christ.

It is right, then, not only to be called Christians, but really to be such . . . ;⁹⁹

And the Romans he implored:

. . . pray for me . . . that I may not only be called a Christian, but may also be found to be one.¹⁰⁰

⁹² Magn. 7: 1; Smyrn. 8: 1; Magn. 8: 2, etc.

⁹³ Rom. salut.—*πατὴρς ὑψίστου καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ μόνου υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ*.

⁹⁴ This is inferred from the fact that he asks the believers to do so: Eph. 20: 1; Rom. 4: 2; Smyrn. 4: 1.

⁹⁵ With very few exceptions he always called Christ "our God"—*θεός ἡμῶν*, or *θεός μου*. Cf. Rom. 6: 3 and the references in note 91, p. 22.

⁹⁶ This is Bauer's comment, *op. cit.*, in the excursus on the divinity of Christ. Cf. W. Bousset, "Kyrios Christos," Gött., 1913, pp. 271, 306.

⁹⁷ The above discourse is intended only as an epitome of Ignatius' religious belief for the sake of background to the analysis of his mysticism. For this purpose a complete exposition is obviously unnecessary.

⁹⁸ This is Moffatt's expression in the article on Ignatius referred to above.

⁹⁹ Magn. 4.

To the Ephesians he wrote (ch. 14) :

. . . perfect faith towards Jesus Christ, and love . . . are the beginning and end of life. . . . "The tree is known by its fruits": so they who profess to be of Christ shall be seen by the things which they do.

The worst charge, probably, which he raised against the heretics was that their life was devoid of love.

For love they have no care, nor for the widow, nor for the orphan, nor for the distressed, nor for the afflicted, nor for the prisoner, or for him released from prison, nor for the hungry or thirsty.¹⁰¹

And coupled with this neglect of social obligations was the abandon of libertinism. He charges them with doing things unworthy of God, of being impure, of bearing deadly fruit.¹⁰²

Not only for Ignatius were church discipline, belief and morals essentially interrelated, but, in a sense, they were so also for the heretics of Asia Minor, at least, their heresy manifested itself simultaneously in these three realms of life. Ignatius nowhere distinguishes between separate heresies: one in morals and ethics, another in belief, and a third in the matter of order. While condemning these classes of evil he is always speaking about the same class or group of people who are guilty of them. It appears then that Ignatius was concentrating on a very definite situation in the churches of Asia Minor, a dangerous crisis which was called forth by a wide-spread separatistic movement preaching a dualistic Christology and a dualistic ethic, which made for libertinism and a decline of brotherly love, and denying the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. Because of its presumable origin in Jewish-Christian circles and its Christless Christianity Ignatius called this movement "Judaism." The full extent of the crisis which was threatening the church can be appreciated only when it is realized that the separatists in Asia Minor were related to the Antichrists of the Johannine Epistles, to the rebels in Corinth of the First Epistle of Clement,

¹⁰⁰ Rom. 3: 2.

¹⁰¹ Smyrn. 6: 2.

¹⁰² See Eph. 7: 1; 10: 3; Philad. 3: 1; Trall. 6; 7: 2; 11: 1, etc. Ignatius' appeals for purity and sobriety are indirect evidence that the heretics were lacking in these virtues.

to the earlier antinomian libertinists and enthusiasts of the Pauline letters to Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica, and to the Gnostic teachers of the Pastoral Epistles.¹⁰³ It was, then, no ordinary controversy in mere defense of pet themes that Ignatius was waging with his pen.

Our study of this great leader has until now been largely confined to the more practical aspects of his character, but having made so much of an acquaintance with him, we are now better able to analyze his deeper emotions and find the secret of his remarkable personality.

¹⁰³ W. Lütgert, "Amt und Geist im Kampf," Gütersloh, 1911, convincingly demonstrates the integral relationship of these movements in the church. In this book he analyzes the conflicts reflected in the Johannine epistles, the first epistle of Clement of Rome and the Ignatian epistles, and then compares these situations with the others noted above. These latter circumstances he had discussed in detail in the following series: "Freiheitspredigt und Schwarmgeister in Korinth," 1908; "Die Vollkommenen im Philipperbrief und die Enthusiasten in Thessalonich," 1909; "Die Irrlehrer der Pastoralbriefe," 1909.

PART II

THE MYSTICISM OF IGNATIUS

Pneumatic Style

A man's style is usually a fair index of his mental and psychic structure. This is certainly true of Ignatius. Not only in the unique paradoxes and metaphors which flash forth intermittently, but throughout the whole of the letters a powerful mystic undertone is discernible. Besides passages already quoted many more could be cited by way of specific illustration.¹ But the subsequent study obviates this for the present. Two passages, however, merit special references at this juncture, because, like mysterious, cavernous outlets of underground rivers, they are at once overwhelming proof of the existence of these subtle currents and the gateway for the exploration of their hidden courses. These passages are Romans 5-7 and Philadelphians 7. In the first we read:

May nothing seen or unseen envy me my attaining to Jesus Christ. Let fire and cross and conflicts with beasts, cuttings and rendings,² rackings of bones, mangling of limbs, crushings of my whole body, cruel tortures of the devil come upon me, only let me attain to Jesus Christ (5: 3). . . . My lust has been crucified, and there is in me no fire of carnal love, but only water living and speaking in me,³ and saying to me from within, "Come to the Father." I have no pleasure in the food of corruption or in the pleasures of this life. The bread of God I want, that is, the flesh of Jesus Christ who was "of the seed of David," and for drink I desire his blood, which is incorruptible love (7: 2-3).

¹ For instance: Eph. 11: 2; 16: 2.

² ἀνατομαί, διαιρέσεις: should perhaps be omitted with L Σ Euseb. Euseb.-Syr., S₂ A omit only the former.

³ καὶ λαλοῦν: G M L; ἀλλόμενον: g. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, Vol. II, Sect. 1, *ad loc.*, prefers to emend λαλοῦν to the second variant. This he does mainly under the influence of John 4: 14, and obviously without the support of the best MS. tradition. Zahn, in the G-H-Z edition, retains λαλοῦν; likewise Funk. The scribe of g himself seems to have made the change under the influence of the well-known phrase in John 4: 14. Weinel, "Die Wirkungen des Geistes und der Geister," Tüb., 1898, p. 165, note 4, remarks correctly: "λαλοῦν aber ist charakteristisch und psychologisch sehr fein: ein Wasser, das in ihm rauscht und tönt, λέγον gibt nachher die Interpretation des λαλεῖν. Man beachte den Unterschied von λαλεῖν und λέγειν."

The other passage (Philad. 7) reads thus:

For even if some desired to deceive me in the flesh, the Spirit is not deceived, for it is from God. For it "knoweth whence it comes and whither it goes" and proves secret things. I cried out while I was in your midst,⁴ I spoke with a great voice—with God's voice,—⁵ "Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery and deacons." . . . he in whom I am bound is my witness that I had no knowledge of this from any human flesh, but the Spirit was proclaiming, saying this: "Without the bishop do nothing, your flesh as the temple of God keep, unity love, from divisions flee, imitators of Jesus Christ be, as He is also of his Father."

Specific observations on these passages will be made in the subsequent analytical study, but at present, at first sight already, the realistic metaphors, the antitheses of body and spirit, flesh and spirit, the inwardness of experience, the rhythmic swing of language, all identify them as obviously some of the "best documents of the peculiarity of pneumatic nature,"⁶ and as such expose a psychic make-up of a thorough mystic quality as the cause for the most prominent and peculiar traits of Ignatius' character. Now, the four main elements of his mysticism will appear to be: (1) the idealism, of the Platonic school, with which he conceives the reality of the Church and its order; (2) his thought and feeling that Christianity is a mystery cult; (3) his personal communion with Christ, his cult-God; (4) his prophetic

⁴ μεταξύ ὧν with GLS₂ A. Zahn, *op. cit.*, p. 268, follows g (and Vul.) in reading μεταξύ ὧν ἐλάλουν, "in the midst of my discourse." But this is the wrong reading. It is not only contrary to the context which makes a visit to Philadelphia obvious; but the Greek uninterpolated text and the versions consistently render the former reading.

⁵ θεοῦ φωνῇ with LS₂ A. G omits it by homoeoteleuton as Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, note *ad. loc.*, remarks. That it was in the original copy, however, is also indirectly evidenced by the paraphrase of the interpolator (g): οὐκ ἐμὸς δὲ λόγος ἀλλὰ θεοῦ.

⁶ So Bousset, *op. cit.*, p. 264, and similarly M. Dibelius, "Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur," Leipzig, 1920, II, p. 34. Reitzenstein, "Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen," Leipzig, 1920, p. 250, remarks concerning Ignatius' language: "Ignatius verwendet ein festes stilistisches Mittel der pneumatischen Rede. Sie verlangt die schwer verständlichen allegorischen Bezeichnungen (vgl. τὸν ἔμον πνεῦμα τοῦ σταυροῦ) und hat eine feste Typologie. Es ist eine Art sakraler Glossensprache die dem Hörer beständig Aufgaben stellt und von dem Ungläubigen nicht verstanden werden soll, das echte Gegenbild zu der allegorischen, bezw. pneumatischen Exegese, ja eigentlich nur eine Folgerung aus ihr: spricht in der heiligen Ueberlieferung das πνεῦμα beständig in Allegorien, die nur der Begnadete versteht, so musz es der πνευματικός, um sich zu beglaubigen, auch."

self-consciousness. His martyr psychology was a compound of these elements applied to the crisis of that particular experience.

Philosophic Idealism

Canon Streeter in his work on "The Four Gospels" has made a very valuable contribution toward the understanding of the personality that produced the Fourth Gospel when he showed that John was a mystic and prophet. He summed up his analysis by saying: "In him are combined the religious experience of the Hebrew prophet and the philosophic mysticism of the school of Plato."⁷ Now this can be said with equal truthfulness of Ignatius. His prophetic experience will be treated later, but at this juncture we must note his philosophic mysticism—also of the Platonic school—as the fundamental mode of his thought.

Nowhere is this mystic mind more clearly apparent than in the consistent parallelization of earth and heaven, seen and unseen world, this beholding of mundane things "sub specie aeternitatis," and in specific in his conception of the church and its constitution. His classic pronouncement on this subject is,

Wherever the bishop is, there let the congregation be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church.⁸

What Ignatius meant by *ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία* appears in this passage itself (it is the only occurrence in his letters). He is speaking about the individual church not only in the first phrase, but in the second as well. The argument is that the presence of Jesus Christ transmutes a particular church into a catholic church. Obviously there is, then, no thought of a geographical extension in this notion. It is a logical conception equivalent to that of the "universal" as over against the "particular." Each single church is, on this condition, an ideal whole, while the sum of all the individual churches is left out of the picture.⁹

⁷ Synopsis to ch. XII, "John, Mystic and Prophet."

⁸ Smyrn. 8: 2—*ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω* (Gg; instead of ἦτω w. B.), *ὥσπερ ὅπου ἂν ᾖ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς* (with GL as against Ἰησ. Χρ. B. A.), *ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία*.

⁹ When Ignatius speaks of "the whole church," as he does for instance in Eph. 5, he has no thought of the whole of Christianity, but envisages only the undivided unit of the single church or diocese under the jurisdiction of a bishop.

But it is not solely logical in meaning. This "catholic church" exists also in heaven, where Christ is, wholly transcendent over and apart from the particular church on earth. In other words, this "catholic church" is a Platonic idea: the idea of the church; and we have found here a pure mystic notion at the bottom of Ignatius' view concerning the church. The real church is this church in heaven. It is in this mystic, ideal church that Ignatius really lives and his practical appeals for order, unity and faith in a particular church on earth are attempts to bring about an exact correspondence or conformity of this church with the heavenly archetype.

That Ignatius thinks of the individual visible church as a copy of the invisible church in heaven is manifest in the parallelism of the verse quoted above. The bishop is to the congregation what Jesus Christ is to the church above; the bishop and his congregation, Ignatius thus suggests, are a copy of Jesus Christ and the preexistent church in heaven. The mystic pattern required, however, that the congregation have a bishop just as even the "catholic church" exists only where Christ is, for only according to the degree of conformity to the pattern does the visible church partake of reality. Therefore, a eucharist or a baptism or any ecclesiastical rite is without validity, *i.e.*, reality, if undertaken without the bishop.¹⁰ This philosophy Ignatius applies to the whole realm of church order, as he sees in the order of church officers the counterparts to the heavenly hierarchy. Allowing for some slight variations he finds that the bishop, elders and deacons correspond to God the Father, Christ the Son and the Apostles, and in his mystic realism Ignatius constantly sees the one vanish into the other. A few passages will illustrate this mode of thought:

When you submit to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, you appear to me to be living not like men (*κατὰ ἀνθρώπους*) but like Jesus Christ (*κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν*) . . . Therefore it is necessary, as you do, that you do nothing without the bishop, but submit also to the presbytery, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope, in whom we shall be found if we live in him. . . . Likewise let all pay respect to the deacons as to Jesus Christ, as also the bishop is a type of the Father, and the elders are like the council of God

¹⁰ Smyrn. 8: 2; Eph. 5; Philad. 3, 4; Trall. 3: 1; Philad. 7: 1, etc.

and the band of Apostles. Without these a church is not recognized as a church.¹¹

Now it is proper for you not to presume on the youth of the bishop, but in the power of God the Father to render him all respect. . . . Yet not to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, the bishop of all. . . . Be zealous to do everything in godly concord, with the bishop in the place of God and the elders in the place of the council of the Apostles. . . . Now, as the Lord did nothing without the Father, being one with Him, neither through himself nor through Apostles, so do you do nothing without the bishop and the elders.¹²

Zahn and von der Goltz, who have both given full treatments of Ignatius' church idea, and of whom v. d. Goltz especially saw clearly the Platonic character of this idea, failed, however, to recognize the full sweep and consistency of the mysticism from which the idea was born. They agree in saying that Ignatius' view was weak in its practical application to the human pillars of his ideal church. Zahn¹³ complains that Ignatius did not allow for the possibility of a bishop or presbyter to teach and live in an un-Christian way. Von der Goltz¹⁴ likewise criticizes Ignatius for overlooking the essential inability of a human being to be the bearer of the divine, and hence, for joining the reality of the supra-mundane church too closely to the carnal representation through specific persons and institutions. But both of these authorities have overlooked the fact that Ignatius' mystic idealism extends also to the church officers, and that with very practical implications. Ignatius is always speaking about the bishop who is truly a bishop, that is, the human counterpart to the heavenly bishop. If the indwelling of Jesus Christ brings about the union of the objective church with its idea and thus makes it a real church, so the indwelling of Jesus Christ in the bishop is the unification of him with the living idea of the bishop

¹¹ Smyrn. 2, 3.

¹² Magn. 3: 1; 6: 1 (reading *τόπον* w. GLg Lake, Funk, Lelong, instead of *τόπον* with S A Lightfoot, Zahn); 7: 1.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 450.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 77—"Indem Ignatius die Einzelgemeinden mit ihren Beamten und ihren Thätigkeiten als reales Abbild der himmlischen Kirche fasst, vergisst er die menschliche Schwachheit und ihre Unfähigkeit Träger des Göttlichen zu sein. Identifiziert er auch beides keineswegs, so knüpft er die Realität der überirdischen Kirche doch zu sehr an die sarkische Darstellung durch ganz bestimmte Personen und Institutionen." Cf., p. 147.

and makes a real bishop of him. When this union is accomplished not only the church but the bishop just as truly, and the presbyters as well, are temples of the Lord.¹⁵ But the bishop being the copy of the Father or of the Lord (the parallelism varies) is *par excellence* a dwelling of God, which fact manifests itself in his possession of the Holy, Prophetic Spirit. Ignatius' view of the bishop as prophet sees the bishop firmly anchored both to the world of practical reality and to the mystic sphere of ideas. The Holy Spirit has possession of him and in a naturalistic way removes his human frailty toward sin and his insufficiency to bear the divine, thus actually bringing about the congruence between the material copy and the spiritual idea. Finally, it is preeminently through the bishop-prophet (the real bishop) that Jesus Christ dwells in the church and makes of it a visible representation of the invisible universal church. It is this prophetic view of the bishop's person which Zahn and v. d. Goltz overlooked in their criticism of Ignatius' conception of the church and its order. However, the analysis of this prophetic idea must be deferred until a later point.

It is not the purpose of this study to exhaust in all its ramifications the Kirchenbegriff of Ignatius.¹⁶ It is sufficient to bring out the mystic quality of his thought, and this we have seen clearly in his fixed interest in the church which is in heaven and is the real church, and of which the visible church is but a copy.

With regard to the view of Jesus as the head of the church which is his body¹⁷ it may be said that it has no prominence in the mind of Ignatius. Only in two passages are the believers designated as the members of Christ: Trall. 11: 2 and Eph. 4: 2.

¹⁵ Cf. Eph. 15: 1—καλὸν τὸ διδάσκειν, ἐὰν ὁ λέγων ποιῇ, (this seems to refer specifically to the bishop, who was, of course, the teacher in the church.) εἰς οὖν διδάσκαλος, ὃς εἶπεν, καὶ ἐγένετο • καὶ ἡ σιγῶν δὲ πεποίηκεν ἄξια τοῦ πατρὸς ἐστίν. (Here is the instinctive shift to the prototype in heaven.) 2. ὁ λόγον Ἰησοῦ κεκτημένος ἀληθῶς δύναται καὶ τῆς ἡσυχίας αὐτοῦ ἀκοῦειν, ἵνα τέλειος ᾖ, ἵνα δι' ὧν λαλεῖ πράσῃ καὶ δι' ὧν σιγᾷ γινώσκηται. (The pendulum of thought swings back and forth here between the copy and the reality: the bishop and the Lord.) 3. — οὐδὲν λανθάνει τὸν κύριον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ κρυπτὰ ἡμῶν ἐγγύς αὐτῷ ἐστίν. πάντα οὖν ποιῶμεν (this includes the bishop) ὡς αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν κατοικοῦντος, ἵνα ὦμεν αὐτοῦ ναοὶ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν θεὸς ἡμῶν (reading with G L).

¹⁶ For the various lines along which the Ignatian viewpoint was continued see v. d. Goltz, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-165.

¹⁷ See especially H. Schlier, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-97.

In Smyrnaeans 1: 2 they are spoken of as "in one body" (ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι), however, it is not the body of Christ that is meant there, but the body "of the church" (τῆς ἐκκλησίας αὐτοῦ.)

While Ignatius manifests a kinship with Paul and the Pauline author of Ephesians in this mystic conception,¹⁸ yet there are marked differences between them which disprove any literary dependence on this point. Schlier demonstrates this clearly, but fails to recognize one fundamental difference in viewpoint: in the Pauline writings this group of ideas is Christological in emphasis and application, in the Ignatian epistles it is ecclesiastical. So, too, Schlier illustrates this "christlich-kirchliche σῶμα—Gedanke"¹⁹ from parallels in Gnostic writings. While another strain of philosophic relationship is thus demonstrated—which was to be expected in view of the ruling position of the Platonic school²⁰—very little light is thereby shed upon the actual mysticism of Ignatius. In Ignatius these ideas are all carried by a strong mystic pathos, a spiritual experience characterized by a sense of the immediacy of the invisible realities. This can not be said as a blanket statement to cover the whole mass of Gnostic parallels. These must be distinguished as to how far the "Begriffsbild" enters the sphere of mystic experience or is merely the product of mythologizing speculation. This Schlier has not done, which may be urged as a serious criticism of his comparative method. Certainly there is a decided psychological and religious difference between, for instance, the Odes of Solomon and the literatures of the Manichaeans and Mandaeans. The whole collection of the Odes reflects a devout, mystical experience on the part of the Odists, an experience like that of the Psalmists and Prophets, and in specific, as will be seen, of Ignatius himself. So, when in Ode 17: 14–16 the poet first speaks in the person of Christ, saying:

¹⁸ For the view that the N. T. Ephesians mediated Iranian mysticism and dualism to Ignatius (cf. Eph. 19: 2, etc.) see R. Reitzenstein, "Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium," Bonn, 1921, pp. 186, 234, 236. An interesting parallel exists also between Ignatius' thought concerning the church which is in heaven and Paul's idea of the real commonwealth of the Christians: "For in heaven is our state (πολίτευμα), from which also we await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3: 20).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²⁰ Cf. F. Cumont, "The Oriental Religions in the Roman Paganism," Chicago, 1911, p. 202; and E. Norden on orientalized Platonism, "Agnostos Theos," Leipzig, 1913, p. 239.

And they received my blessing and lived;
Because they became to me as my own members;
And they were gathered to me and were saved.
And I was their head,

and then in his own person voices the doxology:

Glory to Thee our Head, the Lord Messiah. Hallelujah,²¹

this instinctive shift of personality in the Odist reveals a very real and immediate experience with the Risen Lord. The confession of personal salvation in vss. 1-5 bears this out. Vss. 10 and 11 compared with Ignatius ad Philad. 8, 9 show also a parallelism of terminology. The Ode taken as a whole, then, suggests that in this collection is embodied not only a mind which works with parallel conceptions and terms, but also a personality which enjoys the kinship of mystical religious experience with Ignatius. In contrast with this literature those of the Manichaeans and Mandaeans²² appear to be almost purely cosmological fantasies, even though serving religious purposes. For "Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen" to have fair results it would, therefore, seem to be necessary first to discriminate between the literatures proposed for comparative study as to their empirical as well as conceptual significance, for after all the conception is different when found in differing empirical settings, even though the terms are the same.

Ignatius, however, does not view only church matters "sub specie aeternitatis," for his own office, the course of his life and his martyr's death are also but visible realities symbolic of corresponding events in heaven. His view of his own episcopal office we see reflected in the foregoing discussion of his philosophy of the church, and how this mode of thought applied to his martyrdom we shall see in a subsequent chapter. That he viewed his life as a course which was really traced in heaven we can see in what he wrote to the Romans:

²¹ Translation by J. R. Harris, "The Odes of Solomon," Manchester, 1920, vol. II.

²² The references may be noted in Schlier. With regard to parallels in general in non-Christian literatures it may be said that since they are already fully enumerated in Schlier's work it is not necessary to cite them again except as certain instances may have value in accordance with the critical principle stated above.

You may sing to the Father in Christ Jesus, because God has considered the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the setting of the sun, after having brought him from the rising of the sun. It is good to set from the world towards God, so that I may rise to Him.²³

Cultic Thoughts and Emotions

From the purpose and content of the letters it could not be expected that they contain a complete picture of Ignatius' cultic views. However, they afford sufficient basis for a sketch of its main features. Ignatius' language is strongly colored by tints of mystery religions and gives the strong impression that he thought of Christianity as a mystery religion. This he could have done, of course, without thinking it through to its final details—as he actually seems to have done. But even a general conception would definitely influence his cultic emotions accordingly; if the reverse is not true, that his own psychic nature would give rise to his cultic ideas.

For Ignatius the Christian religion had the character of a mystery, as we can see in the following passages.

The virginity of Mary and her child-bearing were hidden from the ruler of this world, as also the death of the Lord: these mysteries of a cry which were wrought in the silence of God.²⁴

If then they who walked in ancient practices have come into newness of hope, no longer sabbatizing but living according to the Lord's day, on which also our life has arisen through him and his death, whom some deny, and through which mystery we received faith. . . .²⁵

But they who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must in every way be pleasing to all.²⁶

This was no new mode of expression and thought among Christians. Earlier men had spoken similarly. In the writings of Paul are a number of such instances.

²³ Rom. 2: 2. See on this verse note 4 on page 1. It seems from the whole tenor of Ignatius' thought that this sentiment has a wider application to the whole of life, namely, than just to the way of his martyrdom.

²⁴ Eph. 19: 1—καὶ ἔλαθεν τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἡ παρθενία Μαρίας καὶ ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ θάνατος τοῦ κυρίου • τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς, ἅτινα ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ θεοῦ ἐπράχθη.

²⁵ Magn. 9: 1—Εἰ οὖν οἱ ἐν παλαιαῖς πράγμασιν ἀναστραφέντες εἰς καινότητα ἐλπίδος ἤλθον μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν (with L.) ζῶντες, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἀνέτειλεν δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ὄντινες (with g but without the paraphrase) ἀρνοῦνται • δι' οὗ μυστηρίου ἐλάβομεν τὸ πιστεῖν. . . .

²⁶ Trall. 2: 3—δεῖ δὲ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους ὄντας μυστηρίων Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον πασὶν ἀρέσκειν.

So let a person consider us as servants of Christ and householders of the mysteries of God.²⁷

The mystery which has been concealed from the aeons and generations—but has now become manifest to his saints.²⁸

And the Pauline Epistle to the Ephesians is saturated with the same idea.

. . . having made known to us the mystery of his will. . . .²⁹

This mystery is great, I refer to Christ and the Church.³⁰

. . . in order that a word be given to me as I open my mouth, to reveal in confidence the mystery of the Gospel.³¹

But other phrases show that Ignatius took it more literally in the cultic sense. This is apparent when he says that the “servants (=deacons) of the Church of God” are “deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ,”³² and calls the church members in Ephesus “fellow-initiates with Paul.”³³ To describe the progress of the church in Ephesus he draws upon sacred processions of pagan cults for his illustration:

You are now all fellow travellers, carriers of God, carriers of the temple, carriers of Christ, ...³⁴

In speaking of his death in Rome he describes it as a libation rite and invites the believers to gather about the altar (figuratively speaking) and sing a sacrificial hymn of praise:

Grant me nothing more than that I be poured out to God, since the altar is now ready, so that in love forming a chorus you may sing to the Father in Christ Jesus, that God has found the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the setting of the sun, having brought him from the rising of the sun. . . .³⁵

²⁷ 1 Cor. 4: 1—Οὕτως ἡμᾶς λογιζέσθω ἄνθρωπος ὡς ὑπηρέτας Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ.

²⁸ Col. 1: 26—τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν—νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ, . . . cf. 4: 3, etc.

²⁹ Eph. 1: 9—γνωρίσας ἡμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ. . .

³⁰ Eph. 5: 32—τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ [εἰς] τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

³¹ Eph. 6: 19—... ἵνα μοι δοθῇ λόγος ἐν ἀνοίξει τοῦ στόματός μου, ἐν παρρησίᾳ γνωρίσαι τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

³² Trall. 2: 3.

³³ Παύλου συμμύσται—Eph. 12: 2.

³⁴ Eph. 9: 2.

³⁵ Rom. 2: 2—πλέον μοι μὴ παράσχησθε τοῦ σπονδισθῆναι θεῷ ὡς ἔτι θυσιαστήριον ἑτοιμόν ἐστιν, ἵνα ἐν ἀγάπῃ χορὸς γενόμενοι ᾄσητε τῷ πατρὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ... cf. Eph. 19: 2.

Ignatius was, thus, familiar with pagan cult ceremonials and pictured to himself various aspects of his own cult and career in their light.

The heart of the Christian cult, the Eucharist, was undoubtedly for him a mystery ceremony—a far cry from the memorial service of Paul and the spiritual communion of the Fourth Gospel.³⁶ Participation in it was possible only in a closed conventicle, with the exclusion of the unorthodox (= uninitiates),³⁷ under the auspices and supervision of the bishop or his appointee (= mystagogues and hierophants),³⁸ and in the consecrated place or sanctuary (= sacred precinct of the altar, the *τελεστήριον* as it were)³⁹—not that the Christians actually had altars at this time. The ceremony was a sacrifice and an eating of sacramental food. Unlike Paul whose “thought moved in the region of the Law, the gibbet, and legal relations,” Ignatius’ thought moved in “the realm of the altar and sacrifice.”⁴⁰ The gathering place of the communicants was not the feast table, but the altar.⁴¹ While the sacrifice could not be literally performed, yet a sacrificial hymn was sung,⁴² and in the bread and wine were consumed realistically (realiter) the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, the cult-God.⁴³ Like sacred food to the initiates of Hellenistic mys-

³⁶ See G. A. Barton, “Studies in New Testament Christianity,” Phila., 1928, Ch. VI, especially Part III.

³⁷ Smyrn. 4: 1; Trall. 7: 2; Philad. 3: 3 (the “Passion” is the Eucharist); Smyrn. 7. The same attitude is maintained in the Didache (9). This gains in importance when it is realized that the Didache represents the province of Syria just prior to the episcopate of Ignatius. While this is disputed, I see no compelling reasons for abandoning this view. See Streeter, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–158, 286–294.

³⁸ Smyrn. 8; Eph. 20: 2; Trall. 7: 2; Philad. 4.

³⁹ Eph. 5: 2; Trall. 7; Philad. 4.

⁴⁰ G. A. Barton, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁴¹ Magn. 7; Philad. 4.

⁴² This may be inferred from the use of the word “chorus” in Eph. 19 (*cf.* Lake’s footnote *ad loc.*), and from Rom. 2: 2—“chorus of love” (*ἐν ἀγάπῃ χορός*); see also Eph. 12: 2.

⁴³ Eph. 5—“the bread of God” (*τὸν ἄρτον τοῦ θεοῦ*); Rom. 7—“the bread of God which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, . . . and for drink . . . his blood, which is incorruptible love” (*ἄρτον θεοῦ θέλω, ὃ ἐστὶν σὰρξ Ἰησοῦ* [with G L A] *Χριστοῦ* . . . *καὶ πόμα θέλω τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀγάπη ἀφθαρτος*). Lake remarks on this last word (in a note *ad loc.*), “there is here perhaps a play on the words: the word translated ‘love’ was also used either as a synonym for the Eucharist, or, as some think, as the name of a religious meal originally connected with the Eucharist.” His former suggestion is more correct in view of the apparent fact that Ignatius knew only sacramental ceremonies and no longer the earlier, informal “feast of love.” See also

tary religions,⁴⁴ so to the Christian participants in this sacramental union with God the bread was "the medicine of immortality, the antidote that we should not die, but live forever in Jesus Christ,"⁴⁵ with which magical power it had first been endowed by a prayer of consecration offered by the bishop.⁴⁶ Finally, the initiates or communicants (the members of this cult-church) are πνευματικοί as against those outside (the heretics) who are only σαρκικοί, and as such are in possession of the divine πνεῦμα which enables them to penetrate divine mysteries.⁴⁷

While we can now see in fairly well defined outline the cult

Smyrn. 7: "the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ" *τὴν εὐχαριστίαν σάρκα εἶναι τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* . . .); and Philad. 4. The realism of Ignatius' sacramental Eucharist, as well as its affinities to the mystery sacraments, are well brought out by S. Angus, "The Mystery Religions and Christianity," Lond. 1928, p. 132 f.; and "The Religious Quest of the Graeco-Roman World," N. Y. 1929, p. 167.

⁴⁴ Since the facts of the Hellenistic and Oriental mysteries have been collected for ready reference in the compendia of Willoughby, Angus, Reitzenstein *et al.*, it does not seem necessary to give specific data here and on similar points; their knowledge may be presupposed.

⁴⁵ Eph. 20: 2 (*ἵνα ἄρτον κλῶντες, ὃς ἐστὶν φάρμακον ἀθανασίας* . . . cf. Rom. 7: 3; Eph. 7). Both in his commentary *ad loc.* and in his revision of Preuschen's "Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments," Bauer points out that in the phrase *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας* Ignatius used a widely known "terminus technicus" of medicine. The literary references may be noted in these works. See also R. Reitzenstein, "Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen," Leipzig, 1920, p. 58. So the question has been raised whether Ignatius had been a physician. Bauer quotes the "Syrische Didaskalia" ed. H. Achelis, pp. 381-384, which shows that in Syria the episcopal office was frequently held by medical men. But Ignatius needed not to have been a physician in order to employ a technical, medical term. This particular term seems to have had a popular vogue in religious language as well as in medical usage (such as it was) of the time. But if the tradition ever arose that Ignatius had been a physician, like some of his successors in the Syrian bishopric, it would be only another indirect testimony that Ignatius had first been a wandering prophet (as will be argued later) among whose supernatural powers that of exorcism was always prominently displayed. Indeed, apart from its religious aspect exorcism in ancient times was not discriminated from the art of healing. Equally, the function of preaching was united with the medical profession. See Angus, "The Mystery Religions and Christianity," p. 307 f.; and "The Religious Quest of the Graeco-Roman World," p. 420.

⁴⁶ This seems to be conveyed in the words of Eph. 5: 2 where in connection with the Eucharist, the prayer of the bishop is described as having unusual powers.

⁴⁷ Eph. 8: 2; cf. Smyrn. 13: 2; Eph. 5: 1; 7: 2. The *ὁ πνευματικός* had much in common with the *ὁ ἐπόπτης* of the Greek mysteries, though perhaps more with the *ὁ τέλειος* of the later orientalized and Gnostic cults. The idea was common in the Hellenistic mysteries. Its full meaning will be discussed in connection with Ignatius' prophetic consciousness.

which Ignatius conceived the Christian religion to be, it would be futile to attempt to trace a connection with any specific cult of his environment. The religious syncretism of the age brought about a strong similarity of thought and form in the liturgies of the main cults⁴⁸ so that without specific and detailed data it would be impossible to identify the particular cult to which Ignatius presumably belonged before his conversion to Christ and which, therefore, gave him the framework for his Christian cultic idea and mysticism.⁴⁹

To sense something of Ignatius' emotions during the celebration of the Eucharist it is not necessary to give an analogy with the oriental ecstasy of initiates in cults of Syria and Asia Minor. He certainly was strongly influenced by this environment, as the above shows. But enough of his own feelings are exposed to view to give us a fair appreciation of what they were on such an occasion. The realism of the sacramental union with the cult Lord must have been an unfailing occasion for ecstatic elevation. Others, he said, "had become kindled by the blood of God," that is, the Passion-drama of the Eucharist,⁵⁰ and if they had such an experience during this rite, he certainly must have had it to a far greater degree. His sensuous as well as mental organization was always most delicately attuned to divine reality.

Whenever his thoughts focused on the cardinal truths of God and he sought verbal expression in a confession of his faith, his emotions were stirred to rhythmic vibration which raised his words to lyric heights. So, for instance, after he warned the Trallians against the snares of heresy he swings into the following chant:

Therefore be deaf when someone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, and of Mary, who was truly born, both ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died, while beings heavenly and earthly and under the earth beheld it;

⁴⁸ Cf. Albr. Dieterich, "Eine Mithrasliturgie," Leipzig, 1903, p. 207.

⁴⁹ The present writer experienced the futility of such an undertaking after he had spent considerable time in search of direct and circumstantial evidence which might allow him to make the identification, at least, with a degree of probability.

⁵⁰ Eph. 1: 1—ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἵματι θεοῦ τὸ συγγενικὸν ἔργον That this verse has this cultic meaning will appear in the discussion of the following chapter.

who also was truly raised from the dead, his Father having raised him up, as likewise his Father in Christ Jesus will raise us up as we believe in Him, without whom we do not have true life.⁵¹

Moffatt speaks of Ignatius as "letting truth surge into poetry"⁵² and refers to Eph. 11 and 14 as instances. To quote part of the latter passage may suffice:

Of these things nothing is hidden to you if in a perfect way you possess toward Jesus Christ faith and love, which are the beginning of life and the end: for the beginning is faith and the end is love: but when the two come into oneness it is God and all other things pertaining to perfection follow after.⁵³

Of poetic distinction is also the metaphor of dew for prayer:

. . . that the church which is in Syria may be granted refreshment from the dew of your fervent supplication.⁵⁴

This lyric strain runs like a fine thread all the way through his language, but is especially prominent in his expressions on the ritual activities of the church:

⁵¹ Trall. 9—κωφώθητε οὖν ὅταν ὑμῖν χωρὶς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ λαλῇ τις,
τοῦ ἐκ γένους Δαυεὶδ,
τοῦ ἐκ Μαρίας,
ὃς ἀληθῶς ἐγεννήθη ἑφαγέν τε καὶ ἐπιεν,
ἀληθῶς ἐδιώχθη ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου,
ἀληθῶς ἐσταυρώθη καὶ ἀπέθανεν,
βλεπόντων [τῶν] ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ ὑποχθονίων,
ὃς καὶ ἀληθῶς ἠγέρθη ἀπὸ νεκρῶν,
ἐγείραντος αὐτοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ,
κατὰ τὸ ὁμολοῖμα ὃς καὶ ἡμᾶς τοὺς πιστεύοντας αὐτῷ
οὕτως ἐγερεῖ ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,
οἷ χωρὶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ζῆν οὐκ ἔχομεν.

The same effect is achieved in the liturgic passage of Smyrn. 1.

⁵² In the article cited above.

⁵³ Ὡν οὐδὲν λαμβάνει ὑμᾶς,

ἐὰν τελειῶς εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἔχητε τὴν πίστιν καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην.

ἥτις ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ ζωῆς καὶ τέλος.

ἀρχὴ μὲν πίστις, τέλος δὲ ἀγάπη.

τὰ δὲ δύο ἐν ἐνότῃ γενόμενα θεὸς ἐστίν,

τὰ δὲ ἅλλα πάντα εἰς καλοκαγαθίαν ἀκολουθὰ ἐστίν.

⁵⁴ Magn. 14: 2— . . . εἰς τὸ ἀξιοθῆναι τὴν ἐν Συρίᾳ ἐκκλησίαν διὰ τῆς ἐκτελείας
[with A, Lghtft.] ὑμῶν δροσισθῆναι.

Hasten all together as to one temple of God, as to one altar, to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from the one Father, and is with the One, and departed to the One.⁵⁵

Be careful therefore to use one Eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for union with his blood, one altar, as one bishop with the presbytery and the deacons my fellow servants. . . .⁵⁶

One more passage of undeniable poetic quality must be cited although it has been quoted in another connection already. It is Ignatius' appeal for recognition of the bishop's dignity and the unity of the church which he made under the influence of the Spirit in Philadelphia.

Without the bishop do nothing,
Your flesh as the temple of God keep,
Unity love,
From divisions flee,
Imitators of Jesus Christ be,
As he is also of His Father.⁵⁷

55 Magn. 7: 2—πάντες ὡς εἰς ἓνα ναὸν συντρέχετε θεοῦ,

ὡς ἐπὶ ἓν θυσιαστήριον,

ἐπὶ ἓνα Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν

τὸν ἀφ' ἑνὸς πατρὸς προελθόντα,

καὶ εἰς ἓνα ὄντα καὶ χωρήσαντα.

See also verse 1 of the same chapter.

56 Philad. 4—Σπουδάσατε οὖν μὴ εὐχαριστίᾳ χρῆσθαι·

μία γὰρ σὰρξ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

καὶ ἓν ποτήριον εἰς ἑνωσιν τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ·

ἐν θυσιαστήριον, ὡς εἰς ἐπίσκοπος,

ἅμα τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ καὶ διακόνοις τοῖς συνδούλοις μου.

57 Philad. 7: 2—χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε·

τὴν σάρκα ὑμῶν ὡς ναὸν θεοῦ τηρεῖτε·

τὴν ἑνωσιν ἀγαπάτε·

τοὺς μερισμοὺς φεύγετε·

μιμηταὶ γίνεσθε Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ.

Weinel, *op. cit.*, p. 86/7 calls attention to the 3 × 2 measure of this poetic stanza and argues that the rhyme of its verses (ποιεῖτε—τηρεῖτε, Χριστοῦ—αὐτοῦ) is not accidental, pointing out that the classic age of Greek poetry employed rhyme especially in the solemn poetry of priestly literatures. To such emotions he ascribes these words of Ignatius and observes in conclusion; "So oft er nämlich sonst den gleichen Gedanken wie in der ersten Zeile ausspricht nie verwendet er ποιεῖν sondern stets πράσσειν, das keinen Reim ergeben hätte (Magn. 4; 7: 1; Trall. 2: 2; 7: 2; Smyrn. 8: 1, 2; 9: 1). Uebrigens sind auch αὐτός und πατὴρ Gleichklänge."

This "liturgic pathos" rested, it is true, in part at least on the cultic language of the church, and yet it enriched this font by many times its original value with new contributions.

This "liturgic pathos"⁵⁸ was essentially the product of his own nature—which was musical. It is only a short step from lyric speech to song, and not only was Ignatius interested in music, but singing seems also to have been a frequent and natural expression of his emotions. Certainly he must have been an ardent leader of church singing. He assured the Magnesians (1: 2) that he sang the praise of the churches while in bonds.⁵⁹ Then he frequently employed musical metaphors in exhorting the churches, which perhaps implied literal appeals to engage in singing of praise and thanksgiving. The Ephesians he encouraged (4: 1, 2):

Therefore it is fitting that you should live together in harmony with the will of the bishop, as indeed you do. For your justly famous presbytery, worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop as the strings to a harp. Therefore by your concord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is being sung. Now do each of you join in this choir so that being of one voice in concord you may receive the key of God, and sing in unity with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father. . . .

And the Romans he implored (2: 2):

. . . that forming yourselves into a chorus of love, you may sing to the Father in Christ Jesus.

One of his favorite metaphors for the interrelationship of God and Elder, Elder and church, was the harp and its strings.⁶⁰ Finally, it is noteworthy that (as already observed) the only tradition concerning his episcopal administration deals with his liturgic activity. The tradition says that he established the custom of antiphonal singing in the Antiochene church. Because it says that Ignatius received this idea from a vision of angels thus engaged in heaven, Lightfoot rejected the tradition as having "no element of historical fact."⁶¹ But perhaps it does after

⁵⁸ This is Dibelius' very apt phrase, *op. cit.*, p. 86, *cf.* pp. 36-38.

⁵⁹ Doubtless this is not to be taken literally here; but does it not, along with the other frequent allusions to singing, reflect his own personal enjoyment in song?

⁶⁰ Eph. 4: 2; Philad. 1: 2.

⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, Pt. II, vol. I, p. 30.

all. Ignatius himself may well have recommended the practice on the basis of a vision, and the church would not have thought it strange. On the other hand, the tradition, while preserving the historical fact of Ignatius' institution, may be a record of the church's own explanation of the source of the innovation. Either of these possibilities seems more reasonable than an utter rejection of the tradition.

This delicate aesthetic temperament was apparently the basis of his cultic emotions. The ritual of the church, especially of the Eucharist with its color and atmosphere of a mystery rite must have affected him in the same way as a symphony orchestra does its maestro. It enwrapped his mind and made his emotions vibrate with the magic rhythm of exaltation. But such ecstacy is in itself not mystic. And yet there is every reason to believe that for Ignatius it was a mystic experience. His belief in the abiding presence of Christ and the realism of his conception of the sacramental communion with Him would serve like a transformer to "step up" his aesthetic emotions to an overpowering consciousness of immediate contact with God. Perhaps the process was the reverse: that the exaltation of feeling electrified the thoughts. However that may have been, it seems quite certain, in view of the kind of temperament that was his, that the combination of the two elements of his sacramental idea and liturgic pathos would invariably result in some form of mystic experience. More can not be said about its exact nature in this narrow connection of cult practice. But the study of the other elements of his mysticism will throw light upon this phase of his religious experience.

Personal Communion with Christ

The antithesis between sacramental communion and spiritual or mystic communion did not exist in Ignatius' thought or experience. The latter transcended but included the former. The secret of this unusual situation lay in the basic principle of his personal religion: spiritual communion with his Lord.

The general similarity of Ignatius' piety to Paul's has already been observed. In his Christ-centered religion Ignatius was professedly a disciple of Paul. This he plainly stated to the Ephesians in the following words (12: 2):

You are . . . fellow-initiates of Paul, who was sanctified, who was well reputed, who was right blessed, in whose footsteps may I be found when I shall attain to God.

While he took Paul for his model he was at the outset not essentially different from him in the mystic adjustment of mind and feeling, so that his discipleship was instinctive rather than studied. He undoubtedly felt a deep and natural kinship to the great apostle. This appears among other things in the numerous reminiscences and echoes from the language of Paul, many of which are notably of a mystic strain.⁶²

For Ignatius the word "faith" meant primarily "belief," and yet the ideal of the Pauline "faith" lived on in his personal religion as an imitation of the Lord.

Let us seek to be imitators of the Lord . . . and remain in all purity and sobriety in Jesus Christ both in the flesh and in the spirit.⁶³

The one pole of this "imitatio Christi" was a quiet communion with Him, and the other was participation in His passion. Underlying the former was the profound realization of vital dependence on Jesus Christ. Not only is "our life sprung up through Him,"⁶⁴ said Ignatius, but Jesus Christ is "our inseparable life"⁶⁵ and "our true life."⁶⁶ The realization of being inseparably bound to Christ led to the vivid consciousness of bearing Christ within,⁶⁷ of being the temple of the indwelling cult-God,⁶⁸ and therefore of being "full of God."⁶⁹ This was not mere

⁶² Besides those noted before these may be referred to here: Eph. 8: 1-Rom. 8: 5, 8; Eph. 15: 3-1 Cor. 3: 16; Eph. 18: 1-Gal. 5: 11, 1 Cor. 1: 18; Eph. 19: 3-Rom. 6: 4; Magn. 10: 2-1 Cor. 5: 7; Trall. 5: 1-1 Cor. 7: 22; Rom. 10: 3-2 Thess. 3: 5; Philad. 4-1 Cor. 10: 16, 17; Philad. 7-1 Cor. 2: 10; Smyrn. 4: 2-Philip. 4: 13.

⁶³ Eph. 10: 3; cf. Trall. 1: 2; Eph. 1: 1.

⁶⁴ Magn. 9: 1; cf. Trall. 8: 1.

⁶⁵ Eph. 3: 2; cf. Magn. 1: 2; 15; Trall. 7: 1.

⁶⁶ Smyrn. 4: 1.

⁶⁷ Magn. 12—'Ἰησοῦν γὰρ Χριστὸν ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς. And see the subsequent discussion of the name Theophoros.

⁶⁸ Eph. 15: 3—οὐδὲν λανθάνει τὸν κύριον . . . πάντα οὖν ποιῶμεν ὡς αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν κατοικοῦντος, ἵνα ὤμεν αὐτοῦ ναοὶ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν θεὸς ἡμῶν [with GL; ἐν ἡμῖν θεὸς Sg, θεὸς ἡμῶν A]. Note that it is specifically the Lord who is "our God in us." Cf. Eph. 9: 2.

⁶⁹ Magn. 14—θεοῦ γέμετε. Here again we find Ignatius' mysticism definitely related to that of his age. The idea that the devotee could be filled by his god was popular among the Greeks. See E. Rhode, "Psyche,"

rhetoric with Ignatius, but a true, experiential reality. He thought his mystic union with Christ to be like the union of the risen Christ with the Father during the 40 days with his disciples, of whom he said,

For I know and believe that he was in the flesh even after the Resurrection. . . . And after his Resurrection he ate and drank with them as a being of flesh, although he was united in spirit to the Father,⁷⁰

that is, being united with Christ, he felt himself to be like his Master at that time, *πνευματικός καὶ σαρκικός*.⁷¹ The primal attitude of his communion seems to have been quietistic and contemplative. This may be inferred from several passages: first, two in the epistle to the Ephesians. In chapter 15: 1, 2 he wrote:

It is better to be silent and be real, than to talk and to be unreal. . . . He who truly possesses the word of Jesus can also hear His silence, that he may be perfect, in order that he may act through what he says, and be understood through his silence.

The essence of this curious expression seems to be the thought that he who is in touch with Christ can hear him in his silence, that is, Christ's silence, which, of course, requires silence on the part of the listener. The other passage is 6: 1,

And the more anyone sees that the bishop is silent, the more let him fear him . . . it is clear that we must regard the bishop as the Lord himself.

This attitude of reverence before the silent bishop seems clearly to be a reflection of Ignatius' silent waiting on the Lord. Maintaining this inner calm toward his God even in the face of the turbulence of martyrdom he could hear His voice within, quiet and gentle as flowing water, saying, "Come to the Father."⁷² It has been well said that "Ignatius was surely much more inclined to restfulness and joy than his letters at first sight would

Engl. translation, London, 1925, p. 259 f. Even the above phrase occurred in almost identical form in Hellenistic literatures, both Greek and Latin. See the references collected by Bauer in his commentary *ad loc.*

⁷⁰ Smyrn. 3: 1, 3 *συνέφαγεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνέπιεν ὡς σαρκικός, καὶ περ πνευματικῶς ἠρωμένος τῷ πατρί*. Compare Eph. 10: 3—*ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ σαρκικῶς καὶ πνευματικῶς*.

⁷¹ I find that Reitzenstein, "Gnostiker und Pneumatiker," Göttingen, 1916, p. 80, note 1, remarks that Ignatius considered the Pneumatist to be so.

⁷² Rom. 7: 2.

suggest."⁷³ His defense of the quiet bishop of Philadelphia is full of sympathetic understanding and thus reflects his own inclination both to enjoy silence and to be inwardly attuned to the delicate touch of the Spirit:

Knowing that the bishop obtained the service of the common welfare neither for himself nor through men, nor in vainglory, but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, I was amazed at his gentleness for by keeping silent he accomplishes more than those who speak (omitting *μάταια* with A. Lightfoot). For he is attuned to the commandments like the harp to its strings.⁷⁴

To Ignatius, as to his ideal, the Apostle Paul, this fine mysticism summed itself up as a continuous "in Christ"-experience.⁷⁵ Thus, like all great mystics, Ignatius' personal communion with God was immediate and spiritual, nourished by a quiet meditation and waiting upon Him.⁷⁶

The other side of this receptive mysticism was more outwardly emotional in character, for its specific focal point was the Passion of Christ, the cult-God. But before it can be said that the mass of references to the Passion testify to a passion-mysticism of Ignatius, the passages must be analyzed and classified. Such an analysis reveals the fact that these references group themselves

⁷³ J. De Zwaan, "Ignatius and the Odist," American Journal of Theology, vol. XV, 1911.

⁷⁴ Philad. 1; cf. Rom. 2; Eph. 15: 2.

⁷⁵ This is apparent in the frequency and variation with which the phrase "in Jesus Christ" or "in Christ Jesus" occurs: Eph. 1: 1; 3: 1; 8: 2; 11: 1, 2; 20: 2; Magn. 6: 2; Trall. 9: 2; Rom. 1: 1; 2: 2; 4: 3; 6: 1; Philad. 10: 2. In this list I enumerate only those instances which seem to me to have palpable empirical content. That the phrase is a fixed expression of mystic meaning needs no longer to be demonstrated.

⁷⁶ In this respect Ignatius shows striking kinship with his contemporary, the bard of the Odes of Solomon (contemporary on the theory of J. R. Harris, *op. cit.*). This will readily be recognized by comparing with the above quotations from Ignatius the following passages (Harris' translation):

Ode 6: 1—"As the hand moves over the harp, and the strings speak;
So speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord,
And I speak by His love."

Ode 12: 8—"And by Him the worlds spake one to the other:
And those that were silent acquired speech."

Ode 26: 1, 2, 3 and especially, 12, 13—
"For it suffices to know and to rest;
For in the rest the singers stand;
Like a river which has an abundant fountain,
And flows to the help of them that seek it."

into three classes: (1) doctrinal statements, (2) allusions to the Eucharist, (3) anticipations of martyrdom. Most of the references can be classified without any doubt. The bulk of them are doctrinal and historical (group 1).⁷⁷ Three instances obviously allude to the rite of the Eucharist (group 2).⁷⁸ Three other passages are incident to Ignatius' anticipation of martyrdom (group 3).⁷⁹ Inasmuch as these are by far the majority of references to the suffering of Christ, it would appear that the centrality of the Passion in Ignatius' mind was due on the one hand to the attack upon its reality which the Docetists were making, and which contributed to the strong emphasis on the realism of the Eucharist, and on the other hand to the influence of impending martyrdom, which influence entered his life only in its final stage. Thus far, then, there is no evidence of a genuine passion mysticism in Ignatius' religion, as it was so prominent in Paul's. But a few passages need to be examined yet before that inference can be conclusively established.

The first of these is Ephesians' salutation,

Ignatius . . . to the Church . . . which is . . . united and chosen through true suffering (*ἐν πάθει ἀληθινῷ*).

The question here is, to what does the expression "true suffering" refer: to experiences of suffering, real or spiritual, on the part of the church, and therefore, perhaps, as a reflexion also of Ignatius? The Greek contains the answer: the word *τὸ πάθος*. Bauer⁸⁰ points out that this word, even without the article, can refer only to the passion of Christ, for Ignatius does not use it in any other way. It is said to be *ἀληθινόν*, that is, real, genuine, because the heretics said it was only a semblance.⁸¹ It appears, then, that Ignatius had the historical fact, or perhaps also the dramatic representation of it in mind, and meant to say that the historical fact and doctrine of the real Passion and its cultic reproduction was the basis on which the Ephesian church had arisen. In chapter 1: 1 he clearly alluded to the rite of the Eucharist when he said,

⁷⁷ Eph. 16; Magn. 11; Trall. 2: 1; Philad. 9: 2; Smyrn. 1; 5: 3; 7; 6: 1; Eph. 20: 1.

⁷⁸ Trall. 11: 2; Philad. 3: 3; 4.

⁷⁹ Eph. 18; Rom. 6: 3; 7: 3.

⁸⁰ Commentary *ad loc.*

⁸¹ Smyrn. 2; etc.

You are imitators of God, and having kindled your brotherly work by the blood of God (*ἐν αἵματι θεοῦ*), you completed it perfectly.

The experience reflected here is the inspiration of the group while partaking of the sacraments.

In Magnesians 5: 2 he wrote:

. . . unless we willingly choose to die through him (Jesus Christ) toward his (Jesus Christ's) passion (*εἰς τὸ αὐτοῦ πάθος*) his life is not in us.

Having written in vs. 1,

Since now there is an end to all, and the choice is between two things, death and life, and each will go to his own place,

he applied in vs. 2 this principle to the "two coinages, the one of God, the other of the world," which represent the believers and unbelievers respectively who also have their respective goals, and concluded with the warning quoted above. There is in the context nothing palpably mystical in meaning. The sentence seems to be nothing more than a rhetorical, paradoxical way of saying that unless they choose to live in Jesus Christ in his church ("passion" meaning the rite of communion, *cf.* Trall. 11: 2) life would not be their goal.

The Trallians he addressed (salutation) as

the Holy Church . . . having peace in the flesh and in the Spirit through the passion of Jesus Christ (*τῷ πάθει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*), who is our hope in our resurrection unto him.

A comparison of this with his salutation to the Ephesians (see above) makes it appear that this expression concerning the passion of Jesus Christ is a stereotyped, ecclesiastical phrase. Ignatius, in fact, explained it himself in this sense when he wrote in ch. 2: 1,

For when you are obedient to the bishop as to Jesus Christ it is clear to me that you are living not like men, but like Jesus Christ, who died for our sake, that by believing on his death you may escape death.

That then seems to be his idea of the church's living in the passion of Jesus Christ.

A similar phrase occurs in his greetings to the Philadelphians, whose church he said,

rejoices in the Passion of our Lord without doubting (ἀγαλλιωμένη ἐν τῷ πάθει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν . . .) and in his Resurrection is fully assured in all mercy.

The ecclesiastical connotation of this passage is obvious. It means, as in the above instance, the doctrine and ritual ceremony of the Passion which to him was the keynote of the Christian structure. This is manifest in the very wording: that it is a rejoicing without doubting. The following sentence,

I greet her (the church) in the blood of Jesus Christ (ἐν αἵματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), is also unmystical. The context ties it to ecclesiastical, cultic practice, for it says that the blood of Jesus Christ

is eternal and abiding joy, especially if they are at one with the bishop.

Bauer observes⁸² that the expression ἐν αἵματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is a pregnant expression for, "as those who are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ."

In concluding his letter to the Smyrnaeans (ch. 12: 2) Ignatius sent them final greetings in much the same language as he saluted the Ephesians, the Trallians and the Philadelphians. His greetings are

in the name of Jesus Christ, and his flesh and blood, by his Passion and Resurrection both of flesh and spirit, in union with God and with you.

This passage also connotes no personal element. It merely exposes the formal way in which Ignatius' mind and language moved on this subject. The name of Jesus Christ led to the expression "and in his flesh and blood" and that to "by his Passion and Resurrection" and that to "both of Flesh and Spirit" and that to "in union with God and with you."⁸³ The series of couplets and the rhythm of the sentence clearly show the action of Ignatius' "liturgic pathos" when set in motion by the name of Jesus Christ.

The examination of these last references has revealed no trace

⁸² Commentary *ad loc.*

⁸³ ἐν ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ αἵματι, πάθει τε καὶ ἀναστάσει σαρκικῇ τε καὶ πνευματικῇ, ἐν ἐνότητι θεοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν.

of a personal passion-mysticism in Ignatius' religious experience. Such mysticism in its Christian form is characterized by a vivid, ruling consciousness of Christ being the ever present Crucified One, and by a constant sympathetic sharing of His sufferings.⁸⁴ But herein Ignatius did not follow Paul, for it does not appear that this was an element in his communion with Christ. For him the Passion was an historic fact which established once and forever the possibility of salvation for those who would accept it as such. And participation in it was for him on the one hand cultic, in the mystery drama and sacramental meal of the Eucharist, and on the other hand, personal, in the distress he was undergoing as a prisoner and in the anticipated martyrdom which he interpreted as an imitation of his Lord's sufferings. But in either case the resultant ecstasy was not a sustained experience or attitude. For the history of the Christian religion, Ignatius' language concerning the passion, especially the expressions in his salutations, are of great significance. It is further evidence to what has already been observed, that Ignatius thought of Christianity as a mystery religion, with the Passion of the cult-god not only as the culminating point of its ceremonial, but also as its final initiatory rite. So "the Passion" could be used as a synonym for "the church," and either alone or in the combination "the Passion and Resurrection" the expression could be employed as the watchword of the initiates.⁸⁵

Prophetic Spirit

Ignatius' prophetic character is perhaps the most prominent because apparently extraordinary, phase of his mysticism. Certainly it cannot be disputed that he was a prophet of his time. A brief treatment will clearly set this forth.

⁸⁴ See A. Deissmann's "Paulus," Tübingen, 1925, pp. 142 f., 153 ff., 157, 250 f., 291.

⁸⁵ The "Passion" as a rite occupied a central position in the mind of Clement of Rome, too. Harnack ("Der erste Klemensbrief," Tüb., 1929, p. 78) observed, "es scheint, dass ihm das Blut Christi das Charakteristikum des Christentums gewesen ist." In fact, the one strain of mysticism which can be established with a degree of probability in the experience of Clement, on the basis of his ecclesiastical epistle, is this cultic mysticism of the Eucharist. It appears in 2: 1, 2, where a group experience is reflected (both in Corinth and in Rome) as centering around the contemplation of the Lord's suffering.

Like many great mystics Ignatius was both quietistic and active. This was natural, for in silent communion with God he heard the inner voice speaking to him,⁸⁶ giving him insight into the condition of the churches,⁸⁷ and even revealing to him "heavenly things, and the places of the angels and the gatherings of principalities, and 'things seen and unseen.'"⁸⁸ With this inner voice in possession of him, he in turn had to speak out, and when he did, it was "God's own voice," as he himself said of one definite episode,⁸⁹ specifying for the benefit of his opponents the circumstances which proved the supernatural inspiration of the utterance: his ignorance of the local situation, the uncontrolled loudness of the shout, the fitness of the words to the obtaining circumstances. From these self-revelations we know that Ignatius firmly considered himself a prophet, though he did not expressly call himself one. The fact that he did not do so is no evidence to the contrary. A somewhat parallel situation appears in the fact that Hermas omits mention of prophets in his outline of the hierarchy of the church. Now, the "Shepherd" is published and circulated under the prophetic authority of Hermas (*cf.* Vis. II, 4: 3), and besides, on the whole, emphasizing the duty of a prophet more explicitly than any

⁸⁶ Rom. 7: 2. "The water living and speaking within" is an image borrowed from the "speaking" fountains at Daphne, the famous suburb of Antioch. The popular view was that he who drank this "talking water" would receive prophetic inspiration. See the references in Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*, and Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 270-271. The use of this phrase is definite evidence of Ignatius' prophetic consciousness. The composer of the Odes of Solomon had the same consciousness, as the similar expression attests:

"And speaking waters drew near my lips

From the fountain of the Lord plenteously." (Ode 11: 6)

In Harris' theory this reference is added reason for linking the Odes with Antioch and the environment of the Ignatian letters.

⁸⁷ Eph. 20: 2 reading ἀποκαλύψῃ ὅτι with G L (A) and the editors Funk, Lelong and Lake as against the emendation of ἀποκαλύψῃ τι made by Zahn and adopted by Lightfoot. There is no reason for emending the text. The sentence is perfectly clear and its meaning in full accordance with Ignatius' prophetic-episcopal attitude. Funk (*ad loc.*) aptly paraphrases it thus: "Scribam vobis epistolam alteram, praesertim si Deo favente nuntius mihi contingerit, hac epistula concordiam vestram magis confirmatam esse." So also Schlier, *op. cit.*, p. 140. On the divine gift of knowledge and insight through special divine revelation, which Paul valued, see Weinel, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-196.

⁸⁸ Trall. 5.

⁸⁹ Philad. 7—ἐλάλουν μεγάλην φωνῇ, θεοῦ φωνῇ.

other Christian writing of the time, it contains a lengthy chapter (Mand. XI) of specific instructions as to how to distinguish between true and false prophets (*cf.* Did. XI, 7-12). Obviously, then, the prophets must have been an important part of the hierarchy, and it would be fallacious to draw the contrary conclusion from the non-mention of the prophets in this connection. Hermas simply passed over them because he was of their number.⁹⁰ So, too, Ignatius' prophetic office seems to have needed no special mention on his part.

There is further evidence that Ignatius had a continuous prophetic self-consciousness, that is, thought himself the human agent of God. This is indicated by his second name, Theophorus.⁹¹ As a proper name Theophorus is without attestation before Ignatius.⁹² This has given rise to a number of legends which have endeavored to explain the origin of the name.⁹³ Among these was one that Ignatius had been the child whom Jesus had taken into his arms (Mk. 9: 36, 37), and another that Ignatius, asked by the Emperor, "And who is Theophorus?" replied, "He who has Christ in his heart." The variation in these legends was largely due to the possibility of treating the word as an active or a passive form according to its accentuation: *θεοφόρος* or *θεόφορος*. Both usages were current, though the active form seems to have been the more wide-spread. The text of the Ignatian letters has the active accentuation. The Sahidic translation of the epistles to the Philadelphians and Smyrnaeans interprets the word to mean, "he who carries God." The Syrian as well as the Armenian versions treat it as "he who is clothed with God" and with that also presuppose the thought that Ignatius carries God. The Greek manuscripts also have

⁹⁰ So Harnack, "Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel," Texte und Untersuchungen, vol. II, Leipzig, 1884, p. 101; "Mission and Expansion of Christianity," Engl. translation, London, 1908, vol. I, p. 331 ff.; also on the prophetic career of Hermas, "Die Chronologie der althristlichen Litteratur," vol. I, pp. 257-267.

⁹¹ It occurs in all the salutations of his letters. The "most godly name" to which he alludes in his letter to the Magnesians 1: 2, seems, according to the context, to have been the name of martyr and not Theophorus.

⁹² The data for this paragraph are drawn largely from the lengthy excursus on the name by Bauer in his commentary, p. 189 ff., and from Schlier, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

⁹³ *Cf.* Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, Vol. I, p. 27 f.

the active form. This interpretation of the name is borne out by internal evidence. In Ephesians 9: 2 the Christians are called *ναοφόροι*, *χριστοφόροι*, *ἁγιοφόροι*, and *θεοφόροι*, and in Smyrnaeans 5: 2 occur the designations of *σαρκοφόρος* and *νεκροφόρος*. These words definitely assign the active meaning to *θεοφορος* as a name. The idea of bearing God was familiar to the Hellenistic religious world of the time. Epictetus (II, 8, 12, 13) said: *θεὸν περιφέρεις . . . ἐν σαυτῷ φέρεις αὐτόν*, and Irenaeus (III, 16, 3, etc.) had the expression, "capere et portare deum."

Taking the word in its active meaning there are five possible ways of interpreting it. (1) The one who is *θεοφόρος* is the residence of the indwelling God. That Ignatius had this conception appears also in his expressions (Mag. 12), "you have Jesus Christ in yourselves."⁹⁴ and (ch. 14), "you are full of God."⁹⁵ In this case *θεοφόρος* appears closely related to the expression *πνευματοφόρος* (Herm. Mand. XI, 16), which is explained (XI, 2, 9) as "having in himself the power of the divine spirit."⁹⁶ (2) The word could also call forth the picture of a religious procession in which the devotees carry the image of the deity. This idea is brought out in Eph. 2. (3) It recalls the custom of carrying pictures of the gods as amulets. (4) For some, as the Syrian and Armenian versions show, the word represents the conception of a deity whom the worshipper carries as a garment.⁹⁷ (5) It could designate Ignatius as a martyr. The idea that the martyr especially bore Christ in himself was so widespread that the word *χριστοφόρος* became a regular epithet for a martyr.⁹⁸

On the basis of Ignatius' general character it would seem that his own use of the name was either that of (1) or (5) of the

⁹⁴ Ἰησοῦν γὰρ Χριστὸν ἔχετε ἐαυτοῖς.

⁹⁵ θεοῦ γέμετε. See note 69, p. 43.

⁹⁶ ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ δύναμιν πνεύματος θεοῦ.

⁹⁷ This is also a prominent Pauline idea. In Gal. 3: 27 it is very clear: ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε. Other Pauline references need hardly be cited; this image of the putting on of the new man is too well known. In the mind of Ignatius' mystic kin, the composer of the Odes of Solomon, the picture of spiritual clothing is also prominent, cf. Ode 21: 3; 25: 8; 39: 8; etc. In these instances the garment is of light, or of the Spirit of God, which is virtually the same as a putting on of the deity himself.

⁹⁸ For numerous witnesses see Bauer, *ibid.*

above possibilities.⁹⁹ The connotation of martyrdom, the latter conception, is not apparent in the name, however, and does not seem to express his own interpretation. The way the name Theophorus is used with the name, Ignatius, indicates a long association with the two and a long familiarity of the churches with the name. That is, the name goes back beyond the time of his captivity. Then, too, he applied the words *χριστοφόροι* and *θεοφόροι* (Eph. 9: 2) to the Ephesians not in the sense of their being martyrs, but apparently meaning that they metaphorically made up a solemn procession of devotees who carried about the image of their god. Ignatius' mystic nature definitely calls for the first of the above interpretations of the name. He considered himself the temple in which Christ, his God, dwelt. Of course, his Christianity forbids that this conception be interpreted theosophically. It did not preclude God's transcendent reality for him. But the name did express the close relationship of its bearer to divine reality. Essentially, this relationship was not unique in him, for as we have seen, many others, too, were *θεοφόροι*. Yet he was such *par excellence*, like the prophets of the Bacchic cult. All initiates became *βάκχοι*, but only a few were in any sense special mouthpieces of the god.¹⁰⁰

How then came Ignatius to be distinguished by the title *θεοφόρος* as his second name? The fact that the word is not known as a name before him suggests that he received this name after or when he became a Christian. Its application as an epithet to the Ephesians further points to a Christian origin, as does also the 4th century Martyrdom of Ignatius¹⁰¹ which made him say to the emperor: *οὐδεὶς θεοφόρον ἀποκαλεῖ κακοδαίμονα· ἀφεστῆκασι γὰρ μακρὰν ἀπὸ τῶν δούλων τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ δαίμονα*. According to that a *θεοφόρος* is a servant of God, and that means, a

⁹⁹ It must be observed, however, that the ideas of (1) and (4) frequently interchange. One is really just the reflex of the other. In Paul, too, the idea of "in Christ" frequently changes for that of "Christ in you."

¹⁰⁰ See Rhode, *op. cit.*, ch. VIII. So, too, while, as we have seen (p. 28 f.), Ignatius considers the members of the church *πνευματικοί* yet he obviously does not consider them to be such in the full sense of the word. They still have much to learn from him who has attained the advance stage of pneumatic development (Trall. 5). As to Paul (1 Cor. 3: 1 f.), they are, as it were, but *νήπιοι* in their calling as *πνευματικοί*.

¹⁰¹ Antiochene Acts II. The text is given in Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, vol. II, Sect. 1.

Christian. But did others give him the name or did he himself assume it? There is no evidence to the effect that Christians bestowed it upon him,¹⁰² and there is only a little more that he himself chose it. This slight intimation is found in his fondness for compounds with *θεός* as well as *φόρος*,¹⁰³ which suggests that *θεοφόρος* reflects his own taste and choice.¹⁰⁴ In seeking for a possible time for this choice we turn most naturally to his baptism. Lightfoot thus conjectures that he assumed the name "at the time of his conversion or his baptism, desiring thereby to keep continually before his mind the duties and privileges of his newly acquired position."¹⁰⁵ This is very plausible in spite of the fact that such a practice is unattested¹⁰⁶ before Cyprian.¹⁰⁷ However, there is probably a more adequate explanation for Ignatius' assuming a new name at baptism.

We have seen that Ignatius had a finely and delicately adjusted psychic system. He was potentially poetic and lyric in spirit. His aesthetic inspiration easily intensified itself into ecstatic exaltation. This ecstatic capacity was well known, manifesting itself in varying degrees, sometimes even putting him into trances where he had visions of ineffable things.¹⁰⁸ Of his conversion and baptism he tells us nothing, except possibly, as seen above, that it was late in life.¹⁰⁹ We could not expect such information in the kind of letters he had to write. But baptism surely must have been for him a most inspirational experience. More matter-of-fact men than he have been deeply stirred and exalted by it, in ancient times more than today. The mental attitude of the initiates toward the sacrament and its rite was such that it took on a realistic significance. W. R. Willoughby has done much toward an understanding of these experiences both of Christian and pagan initiates. To reconstruct

¹⁰² Trall. 4: 1 refers to the name of martyr.

¹⁰³ For *θεός* compounds see: Philad. 2: 2; Pol. 7: 2—*θεοδρόμος*; Pol. 7: 2; Smyrn. 1: 2—*θεομακάριστος*; Magn. 1: 2; Pol. 7: 2—*θεοπρεπής*; Smyrn. 11: 2—*θεοπρεσβυτής*. For *φόρος* compounds see above p. 52.

¹⁰⁴ This is Bauer's line of argument.

¹⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶ Unless the "new name" of the Apocalypse of John (3: 12) is a reflection of such practice.

¹⁰⁷ He assumed the name Caecilius at his baptism.

¹⁰⁸ Trall. 5.

¹⁰⁹ See p. 11, note 31.

what must have been Ignatius' baptismal experience it is necessary that we remind ourselves that his fine observation of "the sincere conviction of pagan initiates that their spiritual transformation was not only represented but was also really accomplished by these dramatic ceremonies"¹¹⁰ applies equally to the contemporary Christians. Likewise Deissmann stresses the realism of the passion experience which Paul and the primitive Christians had in their adult baptism.¹¹¹ But it seems equally true that they not only went through this sacrament as a reenactment of the death and resurrection of Jesus, but that for many the experience unconsciously patterned itself after the mystic experience which Jesus himself had, with a theophany and an audition; especially would this be the case where the practice was observed¹¹² of a one or two day fast preceding baptism, which practice was probably developed as a means to prepare the candidate to have just such a mystic experience. Justin Martyr's interesting description of the baptismal rite,¹¹³ especially his designation of it as a photism, points positively toward such phenomena. We come to more definite information in the Acts of Thomas of the 3rd century whose description of the rite certainly reflects a popular practice with its accompanying phenomena.¹¹⁴ Here baptism is coupled with a chrism and it is told that the converts thereupon saw the Lord appear before them. From 1 John 2: 20, 27, both Reitzenstein¹¹⁵ and Weinel¹¹⁶ draw the inference that this kind of baptism was current in some form at the end of the first century already. Weinel thinks definitely that there was a rite of unction in the early part of the 2nd century, while Reitzenstein, who is reminded of the ancient ordination of the O.T. prophets, does not think that there was a cultic sacrament of unction as yet, but rather, that the *χρίσμα* consisted of the gift of the *πνεῦμα*. At any rate it is apparent that the rite of baptism, practiced in an age which was permeated with the atmosphere of mystery sacraments was

¹¹⁰ "Pagan Regeneration," Chicago, 1929, p. 280.

¹¹¹ "Paulus," p. 143.

¹¹² Didache 7.

¹¹³ Apology I, ch. 61.

¹¹⁴ Acts of Thomas, cc. 25-27, 49, 121.

¹¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

¹¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 213.

fraught with great mystic possibilities. Now, if we did not have this external basis for the reconstruction of a plausible picture of Ignatius' experience at baptism, it could not be far wrong on the basis alone of his own psychic make-up and cultic emotions, as we saw them centered upon the Eucharist, to conclude that if at any time he had seen "heavenly things" it must have been at his baptism. What he saw was probably a Christophany and what he heard were words of divine approval. His ecstasy and possible trance were to him proof of immediate contact with God, and of equipment with the prophetic charisma. So this experience was to him a commission to prophesy, either for the first time, or to transmute for the service of Christ a prophetic career which, it will appear probable, he had been pursuing already in a pagan cult. The similarity of type existing between Christian and pagan prophets made the transition easy for him. Nevertheless, it was a thoroughgoing religious transformation through which he went, and to commemorate this experience he assumed a new name, than which a more fitting one could not have been found, and henceforth he was *Ἰγνάτιος ὁ καὶ Θεοφόρος*.¹¹⁷

Characteristic of prophets is the consciousness of a dual personality: the prophet's ego merges imperceptibly with that of the god. The writings of the Old Testament prophets are full of instances where the prophet at one moment speaks in his own person and in the next speaks as Yahweh. Equally prominent is this psychic phenomenon in the literatures and religions of the mysteries. Reitzenstein adduces interesting material to illustrate this.¹¹⁸ We need not cite instances here except to call attention to the psychology of the Odist. In other points the similarity in psychic constitution of Ignatius and this unnamed Psalmist has been observed. In respect to this prophetic dualism of consciousness they are also strikingly alike. In numerous Odes the Psalmist definitely speaks as Prophet and in every case he presents the remarkable phenomenon of a transition of personality from Prophet to the Lord himself. This is very impressive in the following Odes: 8, 10, 17, 25, 28, 41. In the

¹¹⁷ It would seem that if Ignatius had brought this name along from a pagan cult it would be found in use elsewhere, too, before him.

¹¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

same way and with equal sincerity Ignatius frequently makes this identification of himself with the Lord. There are two clear instances of this, one is in Phil. 5: 1.

My Brethren, I am overflowing much in my love for you and rejoice exceedingly as I establish you safely, yet not I, but Jesus Christ, in whom I am bound,

and another passage is Trall. 6:

I implore you therefore, not I, but the love of Jesus Christ.¹¹⁹

Apart from connections in which Ignatius' prophetic capacity has already been recognized his letters show ample evidence that his prophetic function was complete according to the best prophetic type of his time. This embraced the gift of teaching and singing,—singing partly in the sense of psalmody, partly in the sense of outright poetic expression. Of course, these two functions overlapped in that teaching and psalmody were very often one and the same activity. The ancient prophet was generally characterized by poetic ability.¹²⁰ It could be said that every poet in so far as his work was of a religious and ethico-didactic character was considered a prophet. And on the other hand, then, every teacher who presented his doctrines in poetic and hymnodic form was considered a prophet. That was what distinguished the prophet-teacher from the ordinary teacher. In the mysteries the hierophant combined all these functions in his own person: he was priest and therefore the leader of the liturgy, and as such he was hymnodist and a poet of sorts, but he it was, too, who gave the revelations to the initiates and the moral instructions to the devotees. It would lead too far were the attempt made here to sketch even in broad outline the history and nature of ancient prophetism. A complete treatment of the whole field, both Greek and Jewish, is given in E. Fascher's notable work, ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ, Giessen, 1927. Reitzenstein (*op. cit.*, p. 173 f.) gives a clear presentation of the prophets ("vates")

¹¹⁹ It seems as though Ignatius makes the identification with less unconscious spontaneity than does the Odist. But that is probably due in large part to the types of literature which they are writing.

¹²⁰ See the excellent contribution of C. C. Torrey on the poetic character of prophet and prophecy in his "Second Isaiah," N. Y., 1928, ch. V.

who were both poets and speakers, and (p. 19) evidence concerning the priest-prophets, pointing out that the Greek designation for the highest class of priests was that of prophet. Ample material can also be found in the handbooks on the period which have been cited above.

Christian sources of Ignatius' time give some interesting views of the poetic and paedagogic activity of prophets. The best known is John the Apocalyptist. While his work is of a distinct dramatic construction on the whole, yet individual parts expose his poetic bent in specific. At the same time his work, especially the first three chapters, pursues a very definite homiletic and didactic purpose, so much so in fact that some circles gave him the title, *ὁ θεολόγος*.¹²¹ But this very title merges these two aspects of his features into a beautiful image, as Deissmann shows: "The 'theologi' of whom there were organized associations, were quite well-known dignitaries in the Imperial cult of Asia Minor, against which the Apocalypse protests so strongly. . . . When we further consider that these 'theologians,' whom we may probably regard as the official special preachers in connection with the Imperial cult in Asia Minor, were often Hymnodi at the same time, the borrowing of the title becomes all the more intelligible. John the Theologian, the herald of the true and only God, is at the same time His great Hymnodus, leader of the choir of those who sing 'a new Ode' (5: 9; 14: 3), and 'the Ode of Moses, the slave of God,' and the Ode of the Lamb (15: 3)."¹²²

The prophet as hymnodist has perhaps his finest exemplification (from the view-point of poetry, of course) in the already discussed Christian contemporary of Ignatius, the Odist. That he was a poet is self-evident; but that he had a prophetic consciousness is not much less apparent. Besides the passages cited above the following Odes bring prophetic Psalms to expression: 8; 9: 12; 12; 10; 17; 18; 20; 25; 28; 41. Perhaps most interesting of all, for the picture it gives of the class of prophets, is Ode 7: 18, 19 (*cf.* vss. 17, 22).

¹²¹ See the inscription of mss 046, 69 *al.*

¹²² "Light from the Ancient East," Engl. transl., N. Y., 1911, p. 352 *f.*

The Seers shall go forth before Him, . . .
And they shall be seen before Him;
And they shall praise the Lord in His love;
Because He is near and seeth.

To this Harris remarks, "The combination of 'seers' and 'singers' is peculiar and belongs to a very early period in Church History; it would be illustrated by the saints in the beginning of Luke's Gospel, who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem, if we could imagine that that peculiar religious society of prophets and singers continued and extended."¹²³ But it seems now that this combination did extend on into the second century.

The Didache adds another line to this picture of the prophet. After recording prayers which were prescribed for the Eucharist (cc. 9, 10) it hastens to say that the prophet should be allowed to conduct the Eucharist as he chose. This indicates that the prophet was believed to be endowed with the ability extemporaneously to conduct the ritual and to speak the prayers with liturgic dignity and rhythm. Harnack has consequently described the prophets as the "Virtuosen des Dankgebets."¹²⁴

In this society Ignatius takes his place with ease. True, his style, where it is lyric, does not reach the heights of the Odist; nevertheless, it is of poetic quality. In the preceding discussions it has already been seen very clearly that Ignatius was carried by a strong liturgic pathos and lyric emotion. Instances were cited to illustrate his poetic qualities and musical nature. The latter was seen both in Magnesians 1: 2; Eph. 4: 1, 2; Rom. 2: 2, and in the following group of passages which illustrate the former trait of his make-up: Trall. 9; Eph. 11, 14; Magn. 14: 2; 7: 2; Phil. 4; 7: 2. His liturgic style may further be seen in Eph. 3: 2; 18: 2; 20: 2; Magn. 11; Smyrn. 1: 1; Pol. 3: 2, and his use of the two-membered formula *πιστὶς καὶ ἀγάπη* (Eph. 14: 1; Sm. 6: 1). Students of the sacred language of the Hellenistic religions including the Christian find that it is characterized by a definite, formal technique whose basis is the participial construction and the relative clause.¹²⁵ This is also the charac-

¹²³ Footnote *ad loc.*, 2d edition.

¹²⁴ "Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel," p. 119.

¹²⁵ See the standard work on this subject, E. Norden, "Agnostos Theos," Leipzig, 1913, pp. 265 ff.

teristic construction of a number of the above passages, thus definitely placing them into the midst of the class of Hellenistic rituals.¹²⁶ Such instances are Smyrn. 1; Trall. 9, 10; Magn. 8: 2, but since they must be quoted in a later connection this need not be done here. This mass of evidence of Ignatius' poetic function as prophet may now be topped by the quotation of a passage which has not been cited yet and which is a beautiful illustration of his hymnodic style, Rom. 6: 1,

The ends of the earth nor the kingdoms of this world will profit me. It is better for me to die to Christ Jesus than to reign over the ends of the earth. Him I seek, who died for us. Him I desire, who arose for us. The birth pangs are upon me.¹²⁷

Of the combination in one individual of the gifts of prophecy and of teaching (besides, as we have seen, of singing) there is much in the early Christian sources, and incidentally also of the prevalence of prophets, especially in the Syrian districts. Acts 13: 1-4 records the fact that at an early period the church in Antioch was led by a group of prophets and teachers. There is no distinction made in the list of names which follows, which fact shows that each one mentioned was considered to be both a prophet and a teacher. From the activity which is recorded concerning certain prophets it is plain that they also functioned as teachers. This is clear concerning Judas and Silas (Acts 15: 32) and is also reflected in the Antiochene Gospel of Matthew (10: 40, 41).¹²⁸ The Apocalypse of John and the Shepherd of Hermas are both the products of prophets who were also teachers, and Mand. XI, in particular, describes the false prophet as sitting upon the chair of the teacher. In the Didache the Apostles,

¹²⁶ Thus Norden treats them.

¹²⁷ Οὐδέν μοι ὠφελήσει τὰ πέρατα τοῦ κόσμου

οὐδέ αἱ βασιλεῖαι τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου.

καλὸν μοι ἀποθανεῖν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν,

ἢ βασιλεύειν τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς.

ἐκείνον ζητῶ τοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀποθανόντα.

ἐκείνον θέλω, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ἀναστάντα.

ὁ δὲ τοκετός μοι ἐπικείται.

The critic Norden (*op. cit.*, pp. 266, 349, 351) recognizes the hymnodic style of Ignatius and singles this passage out as a good example. V. d. Goltz (*op. cit.*, p. 93) also writes of the liturgic language of Ignatius.

¹²⁸ No attempt is made to cite all the N. T. witnesses for that period.

Prophets and Teachers are all practically the same. The Apostles are prophets (11: 3-5) and the Prophets teach (11: 7 ff.), and move about as travelling teachers (11: 1-6; 13: 1 ff.) and finally in 15: 2 the Prophets and Teachers are definitely classed as one undifferentiated group.¹²⁹ Finally, 2 Peter 2: 1 also attests this didactic function of the prophets when it speaks of the false prophets who will come and be false teachers.¹³⁰

The letters of Ignatius show him to have been a teacher of marked distinction, and, therefore, also wherein consisted the main function of his prophetic office. Of course, his teaching was prophetic especially when garbed in liturgic forms, in which instances we can hear both the prophet-teacher and the prophet-singer speaking in the person of Ignatius. In addition to the many references which have been cited previously, only two need to be quoted, and these in order to illustrate the technique of liturgic language.¹³¹ First his Creed (Smyrn. 1):

I praise Jesus Christ, the God who has thus made us wise. For I have learned that you are established in immoveable faith, as if nailed to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, both in flesh and spirit, and founded in love in the blood of Christ, fully convinced concerning our Lord that He is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, son of God according to the will and power of God, truly born of a virgin, baptized by John, in order that all righteousness be fulfilled by Him, truly crucified for us in the flesh under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrach (of the fruit of which are we from his divinely blessed passion), that he might erect an ensign to the ages through His Resurrection for his saints and believers, whether among Jews or Gentiles, in one body of His church.

And then a brief passage in Magnesians 8: 2,

For the divine prophets lived according to Jesus Christ. For that reason they were also persecuted, being inspired by His Grace, to persuade the disobedient that there is one God, who manifested himself through Jesus

¹²⁹ The bishops are said to be *οἱ τετιμήμενοι ὕμῶν μετὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων*. The one article for both substantives definitely makes them synonymous.

¹³⁰ On the subject of Christian prophets see besides works already cited, Harnack, "Mission and Expansion of Christianity," Engl. transl., London, 1908, pp. 331 ff., and H. Achelis, "Das Christentum in den Ersten Drei Jahrhunderten," Leipzig, 1912, Vol. I, pp. 88 ff.

¹³¹ That is, participial constructions and relative clauses which characterize the liturgic style. These constructions are perfectly clear in translation so that the original need not be quoted.

Christ his Son, who is His Word going forth out of silence, who in all respects was well pleasing to Him who sent Him.¹³²

Finally, deposits of Ignatius' didactic work are found in bits of proverbial wisdom which are scattered throughout his letters. The letter to Polycarp seems especially full of them.¹³³ The following are good instances:

Take time for unceasing prayers.¹³⁴

The Prize is immortality.¹³⁵

The part of a great athlete is to be beaten and yet to conquer.¹³⁶

A Christian has no power over himself, but has time for God.¹³⁷

It is possible that he was a native of Antioch where then he found the field for his prophetic work. But these functions, coupled with extraordinary ability to instruct and his powers of leadership brought him into prominent position in the church, until finally he was elected bishop. During these preceding years, however long the period may have been, he must have been like his fellow prophets of Syria: a speaker in the spirit and a seer of visions.¹³⁸ But two factors wrought a change in him.

¹³² The traditions concerning Ignatius could be examined for indirect evidence on his prophetic character, and indeed Ignatius had made a strong impression as prophet upon posterity, as the sermons of Severus of Antioch testify, for instance, his interpretation of the name, "Ignatius," to mean, "Inflamed," that is, with the prophetic spirit. But since this is all very much later than Ignatius it would have only legendary value. This brief note may suffice with the reference to the complete records in Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 22-24, 179 ff.

¹³³ A. C. Coxe, *The Epistles of Ignatius in the Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Buffalo, 1885, Vol. I, enumerates ten such statements. Those that are quoted are given in his list.

¹³⁴ 1: 3—προσευχαῖς σχολάζε ἀδιαλείπτως.

¹³⁵ 2: 3—τὸ θέμα ἀφθαρσία.

¹³⁶ 3: 1—μεγάλου ἐστὶν ἀθλητοῦ τὸ δέρεσθαι καὶ νικᾶν.

¹³⁷ 7: 3—Χριστιανὸς ἐαυτοῦ ἐξουσίαν οὐκ ἔχει, ἀλλὰ θεῷ σχολάζει.

¹³⁸ Speaking "in the spirit" or "in tongues" and "seeing visions" were from ancient times concomitant phenomena of prophetism, and they survived in the ranks of Christian prophets contemporary with Ignatius. It must not, however, be thought that only the ecstatic inarticulate speaking in tongues is meant when the prophet is said to be speaking in the spirit. Harnack points out ("Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel," p. 122) that the latter was often an intelligible speech with the rational and reflecting consciousness held in suppression, or, as he says (p. 124), "an intelligent speech in ecstatic ἀμαθία," (see the case in Philad. 7). "The Shepherd," Mand. 11: 8, 9 speaks thus of the prophet's speech: "... nor does he speak of

The great Apostle Paul had cast his spell over him. As he felt close kinship with Paul so he also accepted him as his example. Now, Paul had been a prophet,¹³⁹ for he had spoken in tongues,¹⁴⁰ and had seen visions;¹⁴¹ yet he had subordinated this gift to that of the Apostle. The other transforming influence was exerted by the practical needs of the church for whose leadership he was evidently destined, if not already appointed. Gnosticism and "Judaism" within the church¹⁴² made careful and thorough instruction in the church necessary. Paul had said in his first letter to the Corinthians (and this letter Ignatius seems to have quoted and alluded to more than any other Pauline writing),

howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue,

and now the situation drove home the lesson. Ignatius became more sober and rational, like Paul confining his ecstatic experiences with accompanying glossolalias to the privacy of his chamber and preaching intelligibly for the edification of the church, but like Paul also remaining conscious every moment of having

himself, for not when man wants to speak will the Holy Spirit speak, but then he will speak when God wants him to speak . . . then the angel of the prophetic spirit which rests upon him fills the man, and when the man is filled with the Holy Spirit he will speak to the assembly as the Lord wills." The *Didache* gives this picture of the prophets, and it is to be noted that the methods of true and false prophets were alike, ch. 11: 7-12: "Do not test or examine any prophet speaking in the Spirit, for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven. But not every one who speaks in the Spirit is a prophet, unless he has the manner of the Lord. Therefore from his behaviour will the false prophet and the true prophet (the Greek has only *ὁ προφήτης*) be known. Every prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit does not eat from it unless he is a false prophet. And every prophet who teaches the truth, but does not do what he teaches, is a false prophet. . . . Whoever says in the Spirit, 'Give me money or something else,' you shall not listen to him; but if for others who are in need he asks that it be given, let no one judge him." The two Christian Apocalypses of this period show how that the having of visions still belonged to the equipment of the prophets. Among the Montanists this was even intensified. Material on pagan prophets, showing the outward similarity of them and their Christian comperes, is ample. A good picture is given in Lucian's "Peregrinus." Besides the works of Fascher and Weinell already referred to, see E. Norden, "Agnostos Theos," p. 134, on the Cynic preachers and prophets; p. 188, on the Oriental and Samaritan prophets; and R. Reitzenstein, "Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen," p. 175, 176.

¹³⁹ He is so designated in the list of prophet-teachers, Acts 13: 1-4.

¹⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 14: 18.

¹⁴¹ 1 Cor. 3: 1-2; 2 Cor. 11: 1; 12: 1-7.

¹⁴² See page 24 f.

the "spiritual gift of prophecy" and of uttering in rational speech the word of God as fully as in the mysterious, inarticulate sounds of the trance.¹⁴³ And when as in Philadelphia he had warned and advised a church on matters of discipline and unity, and had afterwards found out that his grasp of the situation had been correct and his counsel appropriate, he could assert that when he had preached there, the Spirit had preached and his vigorous, loud voice had been "God's own voice."¹⁴⁴ Finally, in a letter to the Trallians (ch. 5) Ignatius admitted that the highest type of discipleship transcended even the gift of seeing visions.

Am I not able to write to you heavenly things? But I am afraid that I should do you harm, since you are babes.¹⁴⁵ Pardon me, if I refrain lest you be choked by what you cannot receive. For I myself, though I am in bonds and can understand heavenly things, and the places of the angels and the gatherings of principalities, and things seen and unseen, not for this am I a disciple even now. For much is lacking to us, that we may not lack God.

In this confession is reflected Ignatius' development from the prophetic mysticism of the Syrian ecstatic to the prophetic mysticism of Paul the Apostle.¹⁴⁶

As prophet, Ignatius gave the church several contributions, all of them of far-reaching consequences. These pertained to the faith, life and order of the church, and were, first, his creed (Smyrn. 1; Trall. 9), which was crystallized in his own homiletic work without a prior model and in turn fructified the formula-

¹⁴³ Paul, too, had continued to exercise the public function of the prophet by teaching and singing. See, for instance, 1 Cor. 13.

¹⁴⁴ Philad. 7. This seems to be the fairer interpretation. In the wording itself there is no evidence of a "prophetic seizure" in Philadelphia, as Streeter (*op. cit.*, p. 177 ff.) says. Cf. Bauer *ad loc.* Ignatius' words are typical of zealous preachers and prophets of those and later times. See p. 40, note 57.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. p. 53, note 100.

¹⁴⁶ Of course, the prophet-bishop of Antioch is speaking. But there is no apparent reason why this should not have been as sincere and spontaneous as the similar expression of Paul, 2 Cor. 12: 1-7. And much less justification is there for inferring from these words that Ignatius had been "addicted to trance practice," as Streeter (Primitive Church, p. 173) maintains. This is a hasty conclusion. More than one passage is required to establish a "practice." At most the words indicate for the time of writing a capacity for trance experiences, and at the same time they show clearly that like Paul Ignatius had suppressed this side of his nature.

tion of the church's first official confessions of faith;¹⁴⁷ secondly, his solidification of the individual, local church into a compact mystery society and the establishment of the view that conceived of the Christian religion as a mystery cult;¹⁴⁸ thirdly, the establishment of the monarchic episcopate, both as a doctrine and as a practical reality.¹⁴⁹ Through him the Syrian church accepted the monarchic episcopate, the church in Asia reaffirmed it, and the Roman church gave birth to the Papacy in the establishment of the Bishop's Eucharist under Xystus.¹⁵⁰

What prompted him in his advocacy of the monarchic episcopal office? The inadequacy of offering a solution based on the psychological interpretation of an *idée fixe* has already been pointed out on the basis of exegesis. Certainly Ignatius presented his idea with great fervor and zeal. If to all great leaders—prophets, preachers, educators, politicians—the goal toward which they have firmly set their faces is an obsession, then of course Ignatius had an episcopal obsession. But such reasoning would be a *reductio ad absurdum*. No case of abnormality on Ignatius' part can be made out on this score any more than in the case, for instance, of Charles G. Dawes' campaign against unlimited speech in the Senate. Ignatius cannot be fully understood unless he be viewed in the light of his mysticism. Both the intellectual and emotional sides of his religion (Christology and cult practice) were born and motivated by his mystic communion with Christ. Realizing this, it becomes apparent that

¹⁴⁷ See the authorities quoted on p. 22, note 82, and on the great influence of his views on the doctrines of the church, R. Seeberg, "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte," Erlangen, 1895, Vol. I, p. 27 ff.

¹⁴⁸ This idea henceforth consciously or unconsciously determined the development of the church. The strong stamp of the mysteries on his views and emotions makes it very plausible that he had been a priest and prophet in a pagan cult before his conversion. It does not seem very probable that his mind could have been moulded so decidedly by influences from the mysteries after baptism if he had had no such contact with them before.

¹⁴⁹ W. F. Cobb ("Mysticism and the Creed," London, 1914, p. 374 f.) argues along much the same lines that have been pursued above, that "Ignatius based his doctrine about the church on direct revelation from the Spirit, probably in an ecstasy, which then he gave forth afterwards as a prophet." He makes another valuable observation (p. 392): " . . . in his unsystematic thought there is placed side by side an appeal to the Spirit who spoke through him and an attempt to give to his prophetic utterances through the spirit the force of ecclesiastical law (Philad. 7)."

¹⁵⁰ I here accept Streeter's historical theory, "Primitive Church," pp. 179-183, 233-235.

the inspiration of his sense of episcopal authority was his prophetic consciousness.¹⁵¹

As prophet he was equipped with high authority, and as bishop he was placed in the position to apply it without restriction, at least as far as the organization was concerned. To understand this we must ask what authority he brought with him as *ὁ πνευματικός* ("Geistträger) *par excellence* of the church. In The Pastor of Hermas (Mand. XI) and the Didache (11: 7) a warning is expressed against judging one who is in the Spirit. This is based directly on Jesus' words regarding sinning against the Holy Spirit, and in the popular mind was probably supported by a fear created by the narrative concerning Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1 f.). It is allowed, however, to judge the prophet by his life. Nevertheless, the prophet, or at least his words spoken in the Spirit, are clearly something sacrosanct. In the language of the mysteries he is the *ὁ τέλειος ἄνθρωπος* who has the ability to *νοεῖν* and, therefore, the full *γνώσις*. In comparison with him the other members are but *νήπιοι*. His viewpoint and position find expression in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians cc. 1-3, especially, 2: 15, 16:

But he that is spiritual (*ὁ δὲ πνευματικός*) judges all things, but he himself is judged by no one. For who knows the mind of the Lord that he should instruct him? No one.¹⁵² But we have the mind of Christ.¹⁵³

He is also the miracle worker of the community¹⁵⁴ and for that reason, too, the one best qualified to conduct the Eucharist, which, in the mystery-tinctured cult took on the meaning of a miracle. It follows that the other rites of the church had to be conducted by one endowed with the Spirit. This is attested concerning baptism (Acts 8: 17 ff.; 19: 2 f.), the forgiveness of sins (John 20: 19 ff.) and ordination (Acts 13: 2 f.). Of course, these were first performed by the Apostles who were at their time the outstanding "Geistträger" of the church. But as the

¹⁵¹ Not as Streeter (*op. cit.*, p. 164) says, a "will to power" instinctive in his temperament.

¹⁵² This is implied by the form of the question.

¹⁵³ For the background in the contemporary cults see Reitzenstein, "Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen," p. 189-192; and "Gnostiker und Pneumatiker," p. 80 f.

¹⁵⁴ Reitzenstein, "Mysterienreligionen," p. 12 f.

last of these cases and the *Didache*, as will be seen, show, the prophet became the successor to the Apostle and the one who led in these ceremonies in the local churches. It is clear that any one who with such a background would come to occupy the bishop's chair would inevitably be accorded extraordinary respect and obedience and would naturally exercise a monarchic authority which increased in power in direct proportion to the length of his incumbency. This is the background and basis of Ignatius' sense of episcopal authority.

Now, his own experience and observations confirmed his mystic intuition and conviction. It was, namely, because he had been a prophet that he was elected bishop of Antioch.¹⁵⁵ In his own person, then, prophet and bishop were one. This combination made the bishop of supreme importance in the church, and for that reason he could say to the Magnesians (3: 2),

For the honour therefore of him who desired us (*ἡμᾶς* with GL) it is right that we yield obedience without hypocrisy, for not this bishop who is seen does one deceive, but is beguiling the one who is unseen. In this matter his reckoning is not with flesh but with God, who knows the secret things.

¹⁵⁵ This statement is made on the basis of the picture which the *Didache*, according to Streeter ("Primitive Church," p. 146-158) representing the province of Syria antecedent to Ignatius, gives of the development of episcopacy. We have already observed that the prophets appear here as traveling teachers. But allowance is made for the possibility of the prophet settling down to a permanent residence. In that case, it is said, he should be given the first fruits, for he is the high priest, as it were (ch. 13). (The claim of prophecy was made for the high priest in Judaism. See J. A. Montgomery, "The Origin of the Gospel according to St. John," *Phila.*, 1923, p. 10 f.; A. Marmorstein, "Der Heilige Geist in der rabbinischen Legende," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, XXVIII, Heft 3/4; and references in G. F. Moore, "Judaism," Cambridge, 1927.) Then, instruction is given that bishops should be appointed "for they also minister to you the ministry of the prophets and teachers" (c. 15: 1-2). In each case the prophets and teachers are identified as one and the same individuals (one article for both) so that the reference is to the prophet-teachers or teaching-prophets. Their "ministry" (*ἡ λειτουργία*) was teaching the word and conducting the Eucharist, so far as the evidence of the *Didache* goes. If the bishop was to conduct their ministry the practice was probably to select as bishop one who had already been engaged in this ministry. Now, this must have been the natural outcome of the authority which the resident prophet spontaneously exercised in teaching and ritual and for which he was recognized as high priest in his community. The *Didache* thus shows that the prophets of Syria were the leaders of the church, but that the prophet who became a permanent resident was accorded full ecclesiastical power even over the traveling prophets of his district. The monarchic episcopate is crystallizing unconsciously; and Ignatius is one who in his own career exemplifies this stage of development.

On the other hand, if some one was in the bishop's chair without being endowed with the prophetic gift, he probably called his attention to this lack and urged him somehow to supply it, as he did in writing to Polycarp (2: 2),

Be prudent as the serpent in all things, pure as the dove for ever. For this reason you consist of flesh and spirit (σαρκικός καὶ πνευματικός), that you may deal tenderly with the things which appear to your face; but pray that the invisible things be revealed to you, that you may lack nothing and abound in every gift (χαρίσματος).¹⁵⁶

With prophets scattered throughout the churches how could the bishop afford to be inferior to them as to the possession of this "spiritual gift," especially in view of the fact that the schismatics made much of their own spiritual endowments?¹⁵⁷ And now as he looked about through the Christian world he found strong support for his ideal, both of the bishop's person and office. At least partly contemporaneous with his own administration and in the two strongest centers of influence in the Church besides Antioch, were those illustrious bishops, John of Ephesus and Clement of Rome, both of whom he must have honored as prophets, John because of his Gospel,¹⁵⁸ and Clement of Rome because of his (to Ignatius, at least) claim to inspiration in con-

¹⁵⁶ Polycarp actually achieved this standing as his own letter to the Philippians indicates and as the "Martyrdom of Polycarp" definitely states (16: 2): "Polycarp, who, in our days was an apostolic and prophetic teacher" (διδάσκαλος ἀποστολικὸς καὶ προφητικὸς).

¹⁵⁷ G. A. Michell in an article on "Canon Steeter and St. Ignatius" (Church Quarterly Review, July, 1931) has rightly interpreted Trall. 5: "May not Ignatius have been impelled to speak of his high experiences by heretics, who claimed that their doctrines were authenticated by psychic manifestations? This interpretation fits the context which goes on to speak of heresy in greater detail than is to be found in any of the other epistles, and gives point to the disclaimer 'I myself am not by reason of this a disciple.'" W. Lütgert (*op. cit.*, p. 120 ff., 136) also finds in Ignatius' statements (Eph. 15: 1; Philad. 1: 1; Pol. 2: 1; Trall. 5) evidence of the vaunted eloquence of the heretics.

¹⁵⁸ Whether or not Ignatius had read the Gospel of John, surely he must have heard of the Presbyter of Ephesus. His silence about him is no evidence to the contrary. He had no reason to laud John to the Ephesians; in the first place he considered himself his equal, and secondly, he was looking back to their connection with the great Paul. That the Presbyter, too, was a prophet has not only been demonstrated from internal evidence of the Gospel (Streeter, "The Four Gospels," ch. 13), but posterity definitely honored him as such. See the Letter of Polycarp of Smyrna to Victor of Rome (Eusebius H. E., V, 24, 3) and Melito of Sardis (*ibid.*, V, 24, 4). Certainly Ignatius must have rated him as such, too, then.

cluding his message to Corinth.¹⁵⁹ This observation encouraged in his mind the merging of the conceptions of bishop and prophet. They became one to him, and if in actual fact they were not, he was convinced that they should be and was enthusiastic enough to believe that they would be. This prophetic complex of his explains, then, his vigorous insistence on the bishop's authority. It is safe to conclude, in summation, that the reason for his high conception of the bishop's position was only his belief that the bishop was also a prophet like himself.¹⁶⁰ Herein he was not an impractical idealist, for he was the child of "an age which took inspiration seriously, as a contemporary phenomenon."¹⁶¹

Martyr-psychology

Inasmuch as Ignatius wrote while facing martyrdom and therefore his letters are strongly colored by this anticipated event, this side of his character has received much attention. To later generations which had a morbid interest in suffering and death Ignatius was preeminently the martyr and his letter to the Romans became a sort of martyr's manual.¹⁶² This picture of him has continued into our time and has dominated some interpretations of his personality. But it is a mistake on the one hand to apply to his whole life and work sentiments which were apparently incident only to an event in late life,¹⁶³ and on the other hand to treat his martyr psychology as a phenomenon separate and apart from his whole mental and emotional make-up.

While it is true that Ignatius spoke with extravagant language of his desire for martyrdom (and much of this must be read in the light of his passionate temperament) it must be remembered that there is no evidence whatever that he had sought martyrdom and had purposely precipitated a situation which would bring

¹⁵⁹ Ch. 59: 1—"But if some disobedient to the words which have been spoken by him (the Holy Spirit) through us. . . ." That Ignatius knew the Epistle of Clement may be inferred from his statement to the Romans (3: 1): "Never have you envied anyone, others you have taught." Cf. Streeter, "Primitive Church," p. 159.

¹⁶⁰ It might be said that to Ignatius "ex cathedra" equalled "ex vaticinio."

¹⁶¹ Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

¹⁶² Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 38.

¹⁶³ As Streeter, for instance (*op. cit.*, p. 177 f.), uses his passion for martyrdom as evidence of an abnormal mind.

this fate upon himself. Such fanatical behavior seems very unlikely in a man who was so eager for peaceful harmony in his churches, for he would thereby have placed himself in opposition to the prevailing feeling of the Church, which was, at that time at least, that while no one should deny Christ, yet they should not seek trouble, but should rather avoid danger of persecution.¹⁶⁴ So, when he wrote to the Romans (4: 1), ἐγὼ ἐκὼν ὑπὲρ θεοῦ ἀποθνήσκω, he merely said, "I am dying willingly for God's sake," and cannot be understood to imply that he had gone out of his way to become a martyr. After all, comparatively little space is devoted to this subject in the letters apart from the one to the Romans, which is, of course, devoted to it.¹⁶⁵

Ignatius' attitude toward martyrdom must not be viewed in the light of later imitators, to many of whom a violent death meant an immediate transfer into glory irrespective of the kind of life they had led. That is, it was an act of such meritorious value that it automatically wiped out all debts and in addition bought them eternal life. This was not Ignatius' way of looking at it. Nor does he seem to have engaged in that unnatural glorification of suffering and pain which later became characteristic of Christian martyrs.¹⁶⁶ Expressions like "near the sword is near to God, with the wild beasts is with God,"¹⁶⁷ and those about enticing the animals in the arena are partly rhetoric and not intended as encomiums of physical torture, and partly drastic ways of saying what he wrote to the Romans (ch. 2), that his death meant real life for him.

Ignatius' attitude toward martyrdom, taken at its core, is not essentially different from Socrates' welcome of the cup of hemlock and of Paul's desire to "depart and be with Christ." In the rôle of martyr he is still the mystic. To him the last act of the mystic drama of his life is but a change from communion to union with God,¹⁶⁸ and it is the inner voice of the Spirit which

¹⁶⁴ See references in Bauer, *op. cit.*, ad Rom. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Rom. 4: 1, "to all the churches," is rhetorical exaggeration. He did not do so at all, as he admits, Pol. 8: 1. Outside of the letter to the Romans Ignatius makes only incidental mention of his martyrdom; only in Trallians does his reference take on a more definite tone.

¹⁶⁶ He seems at no time to have followed the ascetic philosophy of life.

¹⁶⁷ Smyrn. 4: 2.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Magn. 14: 1; Trall. 13: 3; Rom. 1: 2; 5: 3; 8: 3; 9: 2; Philad. 5: 1; etc.

gives him the certainty that martyrdom would be for him the way to salvation.¹⁶⁹ Once this fact is grasped one can understand even this side of his character which seems most strange to our own age. His expressions of humility¹⁷⁰ reveal in this light the mystic's normal desire for self-effacement: less of self means more of God,¹⁷¹ and the hardships which had now come upon him he would naturally interpret as a divine measure of discipline to further this process.

Martyrdom came to him as an opportunity to perfect his discipleship in a complete imitation of his Lord. Though his personal devotion to Christ and spiritual communion with him had been continuous, yet he felt that not until he became a martyr would he be a true disciple.¹⁷² But this was not an idea new to himself. Luke (14: 27) recorded that Christ had said that only he was His disciple who took up His cross and followed Him. In the realism of his mystic mind Ignatius then thought of his death as an imitation of Christ's death. To the Romans (4: 2) he wrote:

Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ when the world shall not even see my body

—thinking of his disappearance as a parallel, perhaps, to Christ's ascension. Later this conception was so fully accepted that the word "martyr" came to be used as a synonym of "disciple" and "imitator" of the Lord.¹⁷³ If he was imitating his Lord by his very death, then, too, he felt that his death had a similar meaning for his churches as Christ's had for his followers. So he was satisfied to believe that he was a ransom or expiatory sacrifice for others.¹⁷⁴

And this suggests to us the explanation for much of his extravagant speech about his expected death. Already he was having real sufferings, and could not doubt that what he was facing

¹⁶⁹ Rom. 7.

¹⁷⁰ Eph. 2: 2; Magn. 12; Trall. 4: 2; 13: 1; Rom. 9: 2; Smyrn. 11: 1.

¹⁷¹ See parallels in Paul's mysticism.

¹⁷² Trall. 5: 2; Pol. 7: 1; Eph. 3: 1; Rom. 5: 3; 4: 2.

¹⁷³ Martyrdom of Polycarp 17: 3. Cf. Bauer, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

¹⁷⁴ Eph. 8: 1—*περιψυχα*. On this interpretation see Bauer, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.* and other references there. See also Eph. 18: 1; and *ἀντιψυχον*—Eph. 21: 1; cf. Smyrn. 10: 2; Pol. 2: 3; 6: 1. See the same sentiment in Paul, Col. 1: 24.

would also be real. If his sufferings were an imitation of Christ's then His had been very real too, and if not, then his own, too, were but a mere semblance. But this very thing the Docetists were teaching. What an absurdity! With indignation and biting sarcasm he retorted,

but if, as some claim who are without God that is, are unbelievers—his suffering was only a semblance (but it is they who are merely a semblance), why am I a prisoner, and why do I even long to fight with the beasts? Then I am dying in vain. Then indeed am I lying concerning the Lord.¹⁷⁵

If the Lord's death was not real, then his, which was, would not be a true copy but a counterfeit—a "lie concerning the Lord." In his enthusiasm for Christ—nay, rather in his mystic sense of oneness with him—he felt that his destiny was wrapped up with his Lord's. Not only did he feel that the significance of his martyrdom depended on the reality of his master's sufferings, but it seems as though he felt—not doubting for a moment that those had been real—that his own death would somehow be a deadly thrust against the heresy of docetism and a vital demonstration of the truth concerning Christ. So with all the eloquence at his command he plead with the church at Rome not to hinder the highest kind of service he could bring on behalf of truth, and pictured in valid terms the end he expected to have to force home the conviction on all that it would be a very real experience for him, and consequently, that it had been the same for Christ.¹⁷⁶

Conclusion

We have come to the end of our study of Ignatius' personal religion. It has appeared that his psychology must be read in accordance with his own plane of life, rather than in terms of modern psychology. It is not a question whether he would appear as an individual of abnormal psychology to-day, but whether he was such to his own contemporaries. The question received a negative answer immediately. His personal com-

¹⁷⁵ Trall. 10; cf. Smyrn. 4.

¹⁷⁶ Zahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-411 f., 419-423, gives a very full and sympathetic exposition of Ignatius' attitude toward martyrdom.

munion with Christ was of the highest type, like that of the Apostle Paul. His work and life as bishop was sober and practical, balanced by tradition and practice. As ecstatic prophet he had been one among many, and respected as one who was in closer touch with the divine than the average Christian. He was a true mystic, with the ecstatic and rational, personal and cultic elements well balanced and the ecstatic under conscious control. Far, then, from appearing to his contemporaries as a queer individual, a neurotic to be avoided, he was looked up to as a leader, gifted with spiritual powers and divine favors, withal a type well worth imitating. Studied from the view-point of Religionsgeschichte he was found to be an epitome of the religious syncretism of his age.

To many Ignatius is martyr above all else. Bishop Lightfoot has remarked, "his glory as a martyr commended his lessons as a doctor."¹⁷⁷ But his glory as a martyr and his lessons as a doctor all sprang from his experiences as a Mystic.

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¹⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 39.

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